YUUKI
KODAMA
13
BLOOD LAD

HUFF!
HUFF!
HUFF!
BLOOD LAD
HUFF!
HUFF!
HUFF!
OH, THAT'S GREAT...
AHHH ...
...THAT FEELS BETTER.
YEP...
SO NOW THE ONLY ONE BEING ALL AWKWARD ABOUT IT IS ME...

BLOOD ON THE TRACKS

YUUKI KODAMA

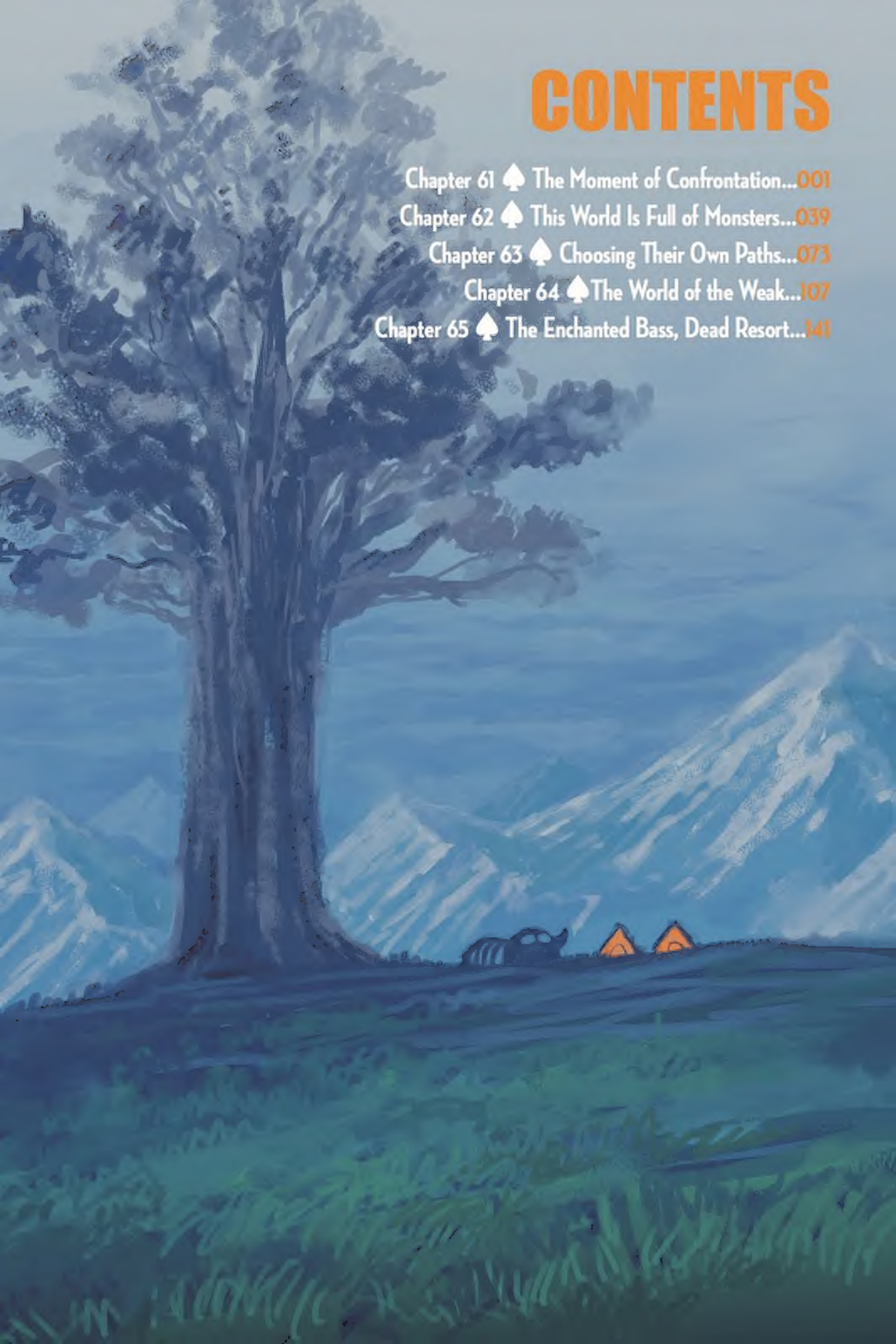
CHAPTER 61 ♥

THE MOMENT OF CONFRONTATION

NIGHT
MARE
FAN
UB

CHAPTER 61 ♠ THE MOMENT OF CONFRONTATION

YUUKI KODAMA



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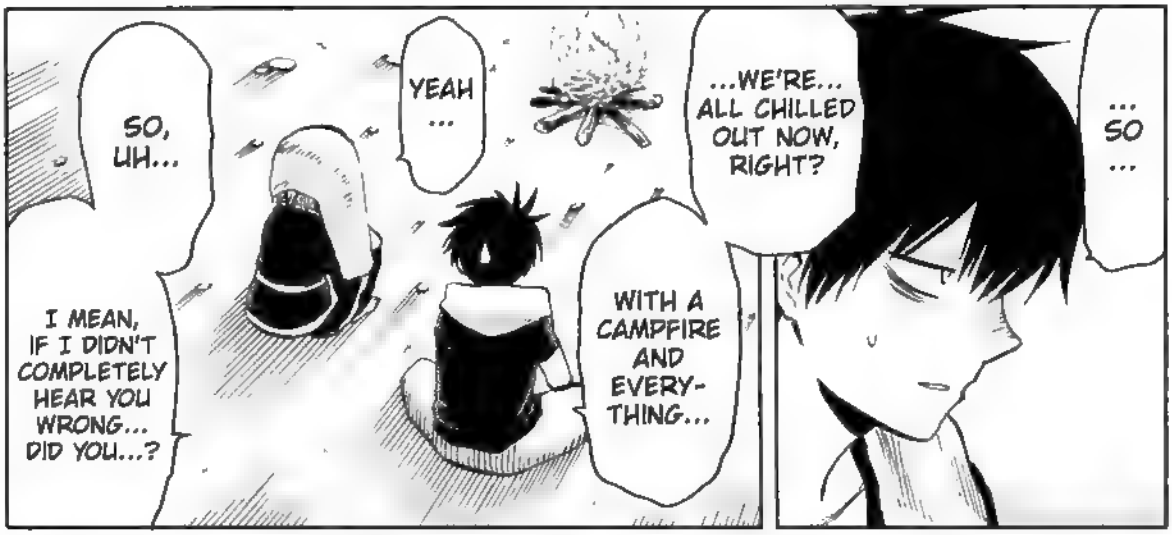
THIS PLACE IS... KINDA SPECIAL TO ME.
PETA
(SMACK)
PETA
WHAT IS THIS BUILDING ANYWAY?
GOOD QUES-TION.
I DON'T KNOW EITHER ...
LOOKS LIKE A FACILITY OR SOMETHING THAT HASN'T BEEN USED IN AGES.
WHEN I WAS LITTLE...MY DAD WOULD DROP ME DOWN HERE FOR A TIME-OUT IF I WAS ACTING UP.
UNDER THERE, IT'S JUST WATER AND ROCKS, AND I COULDN'T GET OUT WITH MY TELEPOR-TATION.
SO I'D ALWAYS HAVE TO FIGHT AND FIGHT TO REACH THIS BUILDING.
JUST SWIMMING, WITHOUT ANY POWERS, LIKE WE WERE.

HEY... YOU ALL CALMED DOWN NOW?
I ♥ NEW
WHEN I MADE IT, PAPA WOULD BE STANDING BY THAT DOOR...
GO ON IN, BELL.
...AND HE'D FORGIVE ME...
ギィ...
GII (CREAK)
...THAT'S WHAT THIS PLACE IS...

SO WE BOTH NEEDED TO COOL OUR HEADS AND CALM DOWN.
THAT WHAT YOU MEANT?
KUN
KUN (SNIFF)
YEAH... I MEAN, SOMETIMES I COME HERE ON MY OWN...
BASA (FWAP)
...WHEN I NEED TO CHILL OUT. LIKE JUST NOW.
HUH...
パチ... PACHI (CRACKLE)
パチ... PACHI
ゴオ... GOO (BURN)
.....
パチ... PACHI
パチ... PACHI


...SO...
...WE'RE... ALL CHILLED OUT NOW, RIGHT?
WITH A CAMPFIRE AND EVERY-THING...
YEAH...
SO, UH...
I MEAN, IF I DIDN'T COMPLETELY HEAR YOU WRONG... DID YOU...?

YEAH...
SO (LEAN)
I SAID IT...

HEY... C'MON...
I LIKE YOU...

I...
I LIKE YOU. THAT'S WHAT I SAID.

ENOUGH MESSING AROUND ALREADY.
...SERI-OUSLY.

HEY, CHILL OUT!
HOW IS THIS BEING COOL-HEADED!?
WHY DON'T YOU MAKE MEEE?
GURI
GURI
GURI

HEY, QUIT IT...DON'T SQUIRM UP ON ME...
EEEEEE!!
GURI
GURI
GURI (SQUIDGE)
...I SAAAID IT...

YOU REMEM-BER?
HUH?
GU (GRAB)

YOU'LL NEVER EVEN SWING THE BAT.
I WANNA KNOW WHAT YOU'VE BEEN KEEPING FROM ME...
IT'S JUST LIKE SHE SAID...

ドン
DON (SHOVE)
THE LAST TIME WE WERE ALL ALONE TOGETHER LIKE THIS...

BAN (BAM)
I WONDERED IF I EVER HAD A CHANCE.
WELL, I WAS SERIOUS.

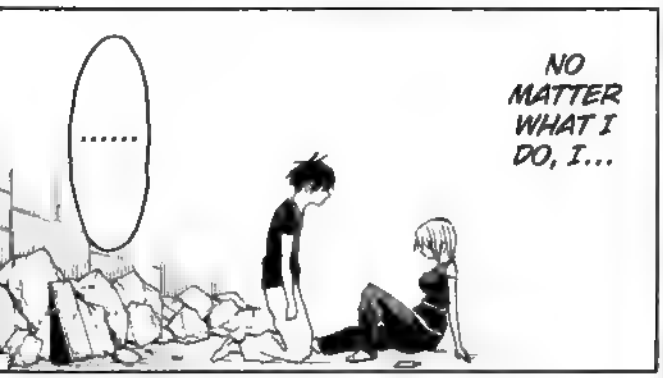
CAN YOU TAKE A FRICKIN' HINT!?
YOU WERE JUST MESSING WITH ME.....

I DIDN'T REALLY MEAN TO GO ON KEEPING IT FROM YOU THOUGH...
N... NO WAY.

WHY CAN'T YOU TAKE THE LEAD FOR ONCE!?
HOW!?
WH... I'M NOT A MIND READER!

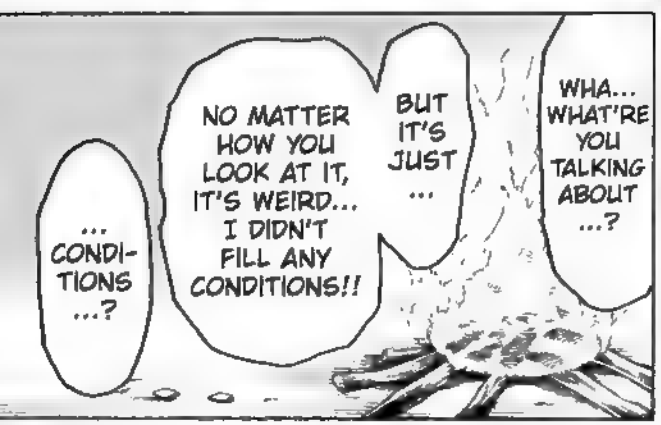
THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO IT!
...BUT YOU GET IT NOW, DON'T YOU?
THIS IS THE BIG SECRET YOU WANTED TO KNOW...
THIS IS ME BEING SERIOUS ...
...MIGHT GET THE WRONG IDEA...
... SOME-ONE...
GIRLS SURE ARE A LOT OF TROUBLE...
...UGH.
MY SISTER'S KIND OF TIED UP AT THE MOMENT...

...
OKAY
...
...A FEW DOTS...
THAT JUST CONNECTED ...
...THE ONLY ONE WHO HADN'T ALREADY PICKED UP ON IT...
...YOU MUST BE...
GABA (RISE)
EEK!
I...FINALLY TOLD HIM...


.....
NO MATTER WHAT I DO, I...

...ME?
... WHY ...

?
HUH ...?
THERE'S NOTHING ABOUT ME... TO LIKE...IS THERE...?

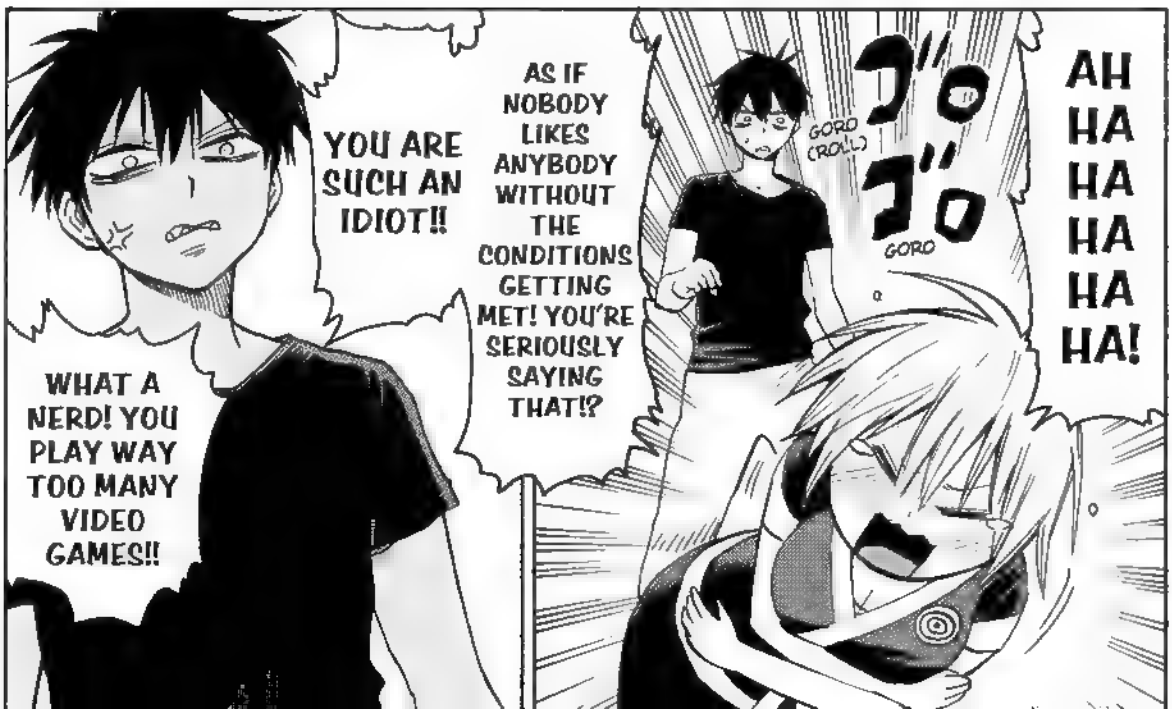

... CONDI-TIONS ...?
NO MATTER HOW YOU LOOK AT IT, IT'S WEIRD... I DIDN'T FILL ANY CONDITIONS!!
BUT IT'S JUST ...
WHA... WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT ...?

NOW...
YOU REALLY ARE DUMB...
...IT'LL ALL BE OVER...

YOU KNOW! LIKE ...
...IF YOU WERE IN TROUBLE ...
...AND I SWEPT IN TO RESCUE YOU LOOKING ALL DASHING...OR SOMETHING.

IT'S WEIRD, RIGHT ...!?
BUT NOW THIS IS HAPPEN-ING... I DON'T GET IT...
PFF!

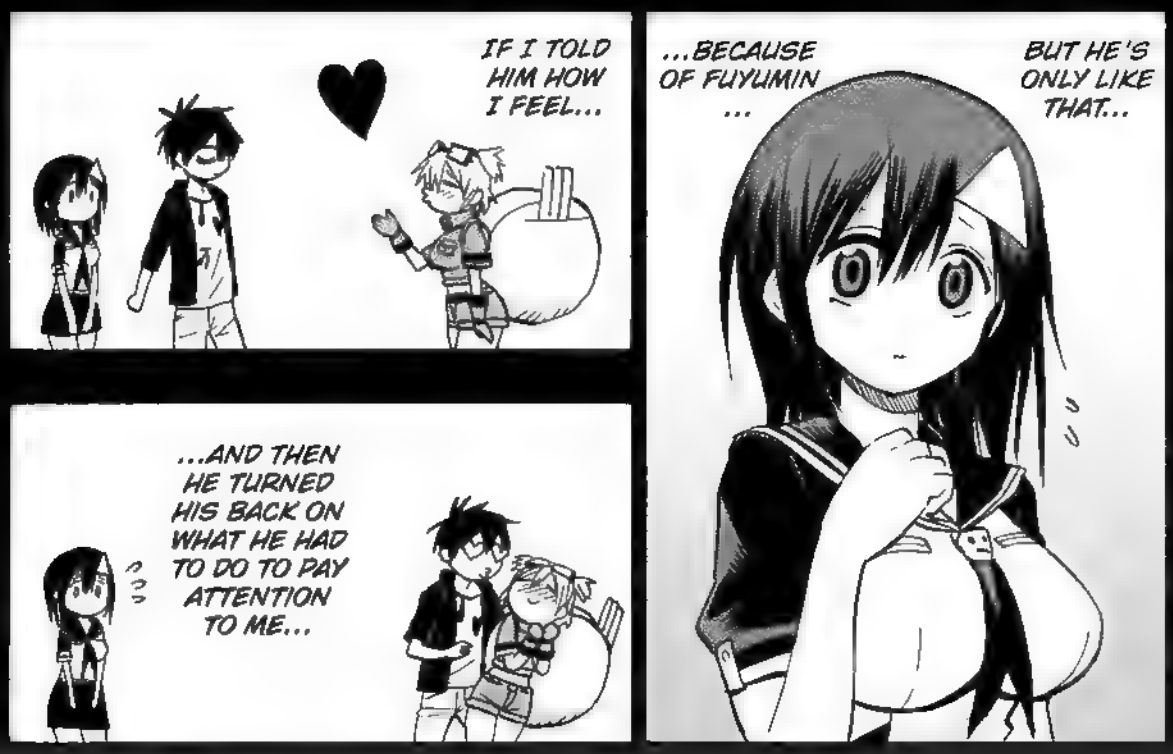
I MEAN, WHEN DID I EVER DO ANYTHING FOR YOU!?
I CAN'T REMEMBER DOIN' ANYTHING LIKE THAT! NOT A THING...


YOU ARE SUCH AN IDIOT!!
AS IF NOBODY LIKES ANYBODY WITHOUT THE CONDITIONS GETTING MET! YOU'RE SERIOUSLY SAYING THAT!?
WHAT A NERD! YOU PLAY WAY TOO MANY VIDEO GAMES!!
GORO (ROLL)
GORO
AH HA HA HA HA HA!

WELL, THE ONE YOU KEEP MEETING 'EM FOR IS FUYUMIN...
THOSE CONDITIONS YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT...
SIGH...
ANY-WAY...
...AREN'T YOU EVEN LISTENING TO YOURSELF ...?
...IT'S ALREADY...
...TOO LATE FOR ME TO GET WHAT I WANT...
NO MATTER WHAT I DO...
...EVEN I CAN FIGURE THAT OUT...
...I MEAN ...

WHEN YOU GET DOWN TO IT...WHAT DO YOU REALLY LIKE SO MUCH ABOUT STAZ?
? WHAT?
HEY, BELL...
I MEAN, I HAVEN'T MET 'IM, SO I DON'T KNOW, BUT...
...ISN'T HE ALREADY KINDA ATTACHED TO FUYUMI?
BELL-CHAN...
I'M JUST GONNA THROW THIS OUT THERE.
HOW DO YOU LEAVE IT OUT ...?
AND EVEN IF YOU LEAVE THAT OUT, IS HE REALLY THE KIND OF DUDE TO GET ANYONE'S BLOOD PUMPIN'?
...
...IS HOW HE IS WHEN HE'S AROUND HER, Y'KNOW...?
BUT MAYBE WHAT YOU LIKE ABOUT HIM...

...I DUNNO...
...UNDERSTOOD THAT SOMEHOW, BUT STILL...
I MUST HAVE...!!
THE STAZ THAT I LIKE...
...IS THE ONE WHO'S TRYING WITH ALL HIS MIGHT TO DO WHAT HE HAS TO DO, EVEN THOUGH HE'S SO DUMB...


IF I TOLD HIM HOW I FEEL...
...AND THEN HE TURNED HIS BACK ON WHAT HE HAD TO DO TO PAY ATTENTION TO ME...
...BECAUSE OF FUYUMIN ...
BUT HE'S ONLY LIKE THAT...

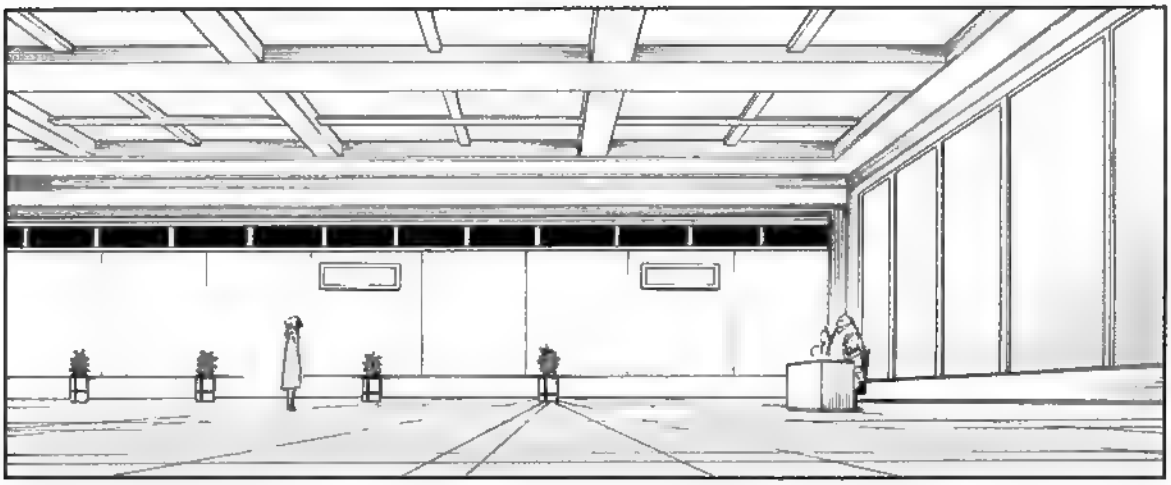
...END UP HATING YOU...
I'D... PROB-ABLY...

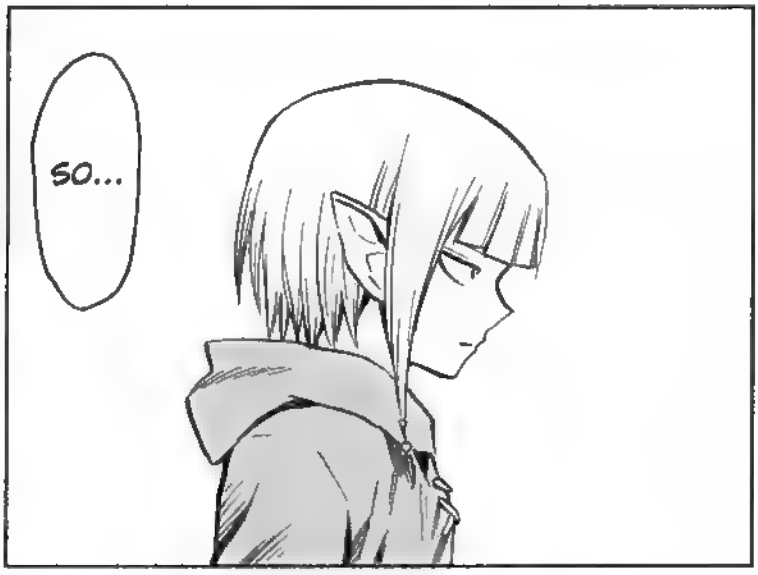
COULD BE EITHER ...
SO WHICH IS IT...?
WHA?
.....

JUST STAY THE WAY YOU ARE...
...AND LET ME LIKE YOU?
SO PLEASE ...
OH... UHHH... I DON'T REALLY KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN, BUT...
YEAH... THAT'S JUST FINE.
UH... OKAY.
AFTER THAT...

...I...
...DON'T THINK I'VE SEEN YOU SMILE LIKE THAT BEFORE.
AND I...
...BELL AND I SAT THERE FOR A WHILE, DRYING OFF.
YOU BETTER NOT TRY ANYTHING, STAZ.
IT'S REALLY HARD TO TELL WHAT'S IN PEOPLE'S HEARTS.
IT'S WAY MORE COMPLICATED THAN I THOUGHT.
WHAT, DID I GET YOU TO FALL FOR ME?
...WAS THINKING THE WHOLE TIME...
MAYBE SOMEDAY I WILL BE.
TO BE HONEST, I'M NOT EVEN SURE ABOUT WHAT'S IN MY OWN HEART.
THAT'S THE KIND OF STUFF I WAS THINKING...

——THREE DAYS LATER——

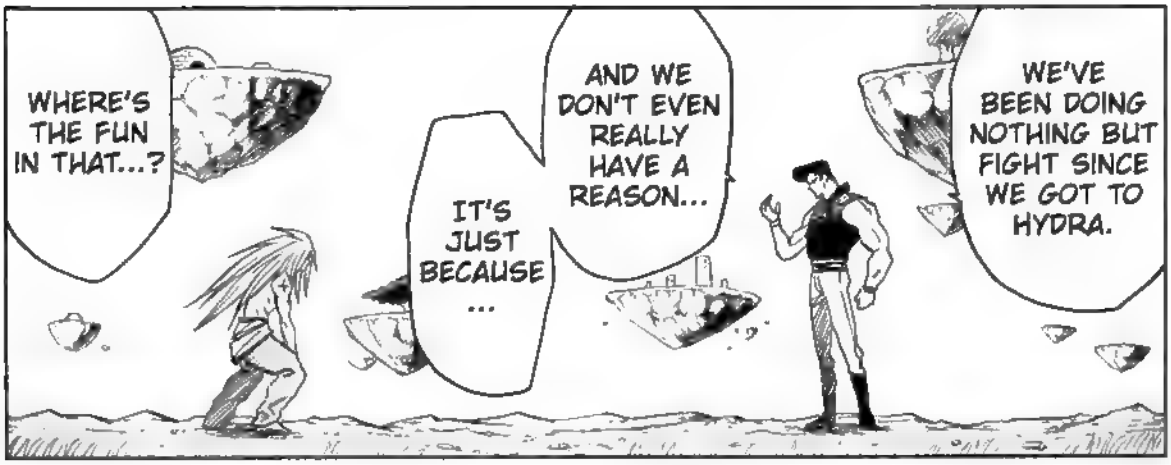




THEY'RE NOT SIMPLE AND HONEST LIKE THE CREATURES OF THE FOREST ARE...
FRIENDS... I'M NOT FAMILIAR ENOUGH WITH THEM YET TO CALL THEM THAT.

ooo
(LOOM)
BIT BY BIT...
...I THINK WE ARE COMING TO TOLERATE ONE ANOTHER.

.....I DON'T SEE WHAT'S SO FUN ABOUT THIS.....
THIS IS FUN, HUH, DOJI?
HEH HEH ...


WHERE'S THE FUN IN THAT...?
IT'S JUST BECAUSE ...
AND WE DON'T EVEN REALLY HAVE A REASON...
WE'VE BEEN DOING NOTHING BUT FIGHT SINCE WE GOT TO HYDRA.

...THEN I HIT YOU BACK.
KOKI (CRICK)
I LET YOU HIT ME...

THAT IS THE FUN PART.
YOU JUST DON'T GET IT...

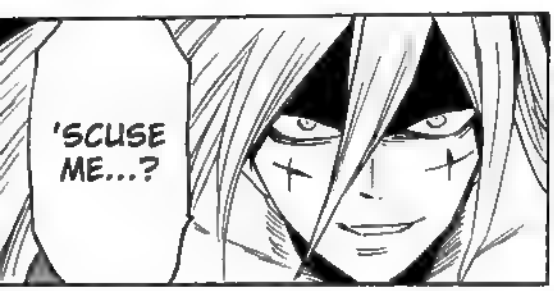
I'M NOT GONNA DIE...
...BUT I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO KILL YOU EITHER ...!

DO THAT OVER AND OVER, AND HERE WE ARE, BOTH STILL STANDING, EVENLY MATCHED...
(LOOM)
THAT'S PRETTY GREAT IF YOU ASK ME.

BAGYA (WHILE)
AND THAT'S ...
...JUST THE BEST THING EVER!
GA
GA
GA
GA (WHAM)
NAH...
.....

WE'RE NOT EVENLY MATCHED.
I'M HOLDING BACK, Y'KNOW, JUST TO LET YOU FIGHT ME.

ZUDA (SKID)


'SCUSE ME...?

BOGYA (THOCK)

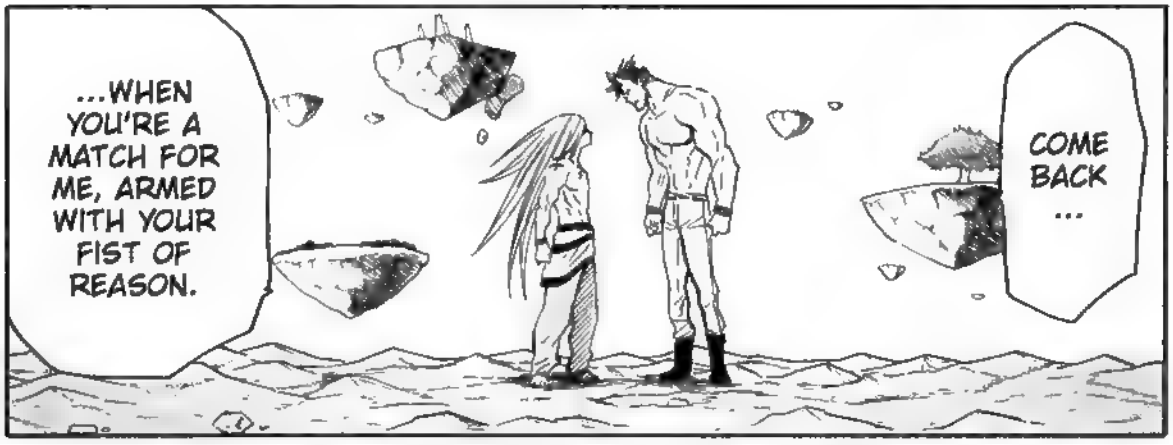
IF I DRIVE YOU INTO THAT STATE, I'M DONE FOR...
OOOOO (LOOOM)
THE BERSERKER LURK...
...IS THAT YOU CAN'T BEAT ME.
HUH? ...SO WHAT YOU'RE SAYING ...
WHICH MEANS, I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO HOLD BACK.
BA (FLING)
I'M JUST SAYING, WE'RE NOT EVENLY MATCHED.
IT'S NOT A QUESTION OF WINNING OR LOSING.

NYAAARGH!
!
ドロロ
DON
(BOOM)
AAARGH!!

ZOKU (SHOCK)
...HOW'S THIS?
NGH...
NOW... WHILE YOU'RE STILL IN YOUR RIGHT MIND...
ZUZUZUZUZUZUZU (VMMMMMM)
...DO YOU THINK YOU CAN BEAT ME?

GOKU (GULP)
RIGHT?
IF YOU DON'T THINK SO, THAT MEANS YOU'VE LOST...
WHO WINS, WHO LOSES— THAT'S SOMETHING ONLY A SANE MIND CAN DECIDE.
BUT YOU...
OOO (LOOM)
...YOU LOOK AT THE BODY ON THE GROUND IN FRONT OF YOU...
...AND THINK, "I WON"?
YOU LOSE YOURSELF... AND THEN WHEN YOU COME TO...

YOU GOTTA STOP TELLIN' YOURSELF SUCH UNCOOL THINGS, JACK...


...WHEN YOU'RE A MATCH FOR ME, ARMED WITH YOUR FIST OF REASON.
COME BACK ...

THEN WE CAN TALK.

ZA (KTCH)
ZA
I WOULDN'T CALL IT RELAXING ...
BUT IF YOU HOLD BACK LIKE THAT, I CAN JUST STAND TO LISTEN.
WAS MY SINGING RELAXING?
...HOW DO YOU FEEL? YOU'RE NOT SICK?
.....
...NO GOOD, HUH ...?
STOP! SHUT UP ALREADY!!
HOW ABOUT THIS, THEN?

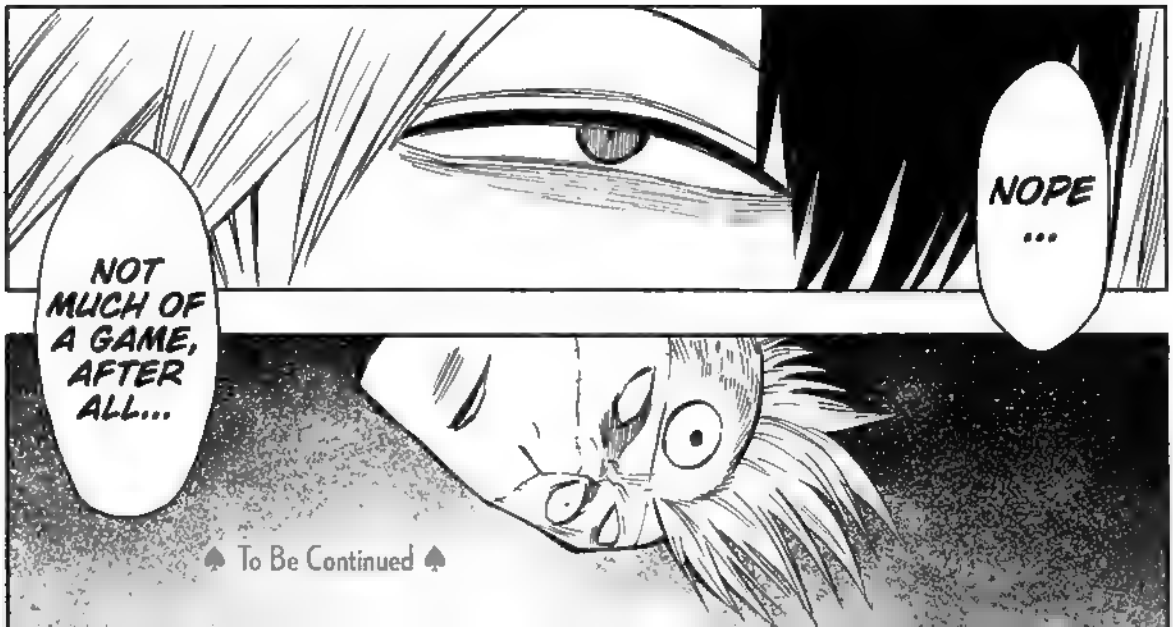
THINGS ARE PROGRESSING WITH THE BLACKLISTED, ONE MIGHT SAY.
...SO...
WHAT ABOUT BRAZ? HOW'S HE DOING?
YEAH ...?
WELL, TAKE A LOOK...
...WHAT HAP-PENED?
THIS IS THE MOST RECENT PHOTO HE SENT ME.
.....
PRETTY BAD, ACTUALLY.
... WHO'S THAT ...!?

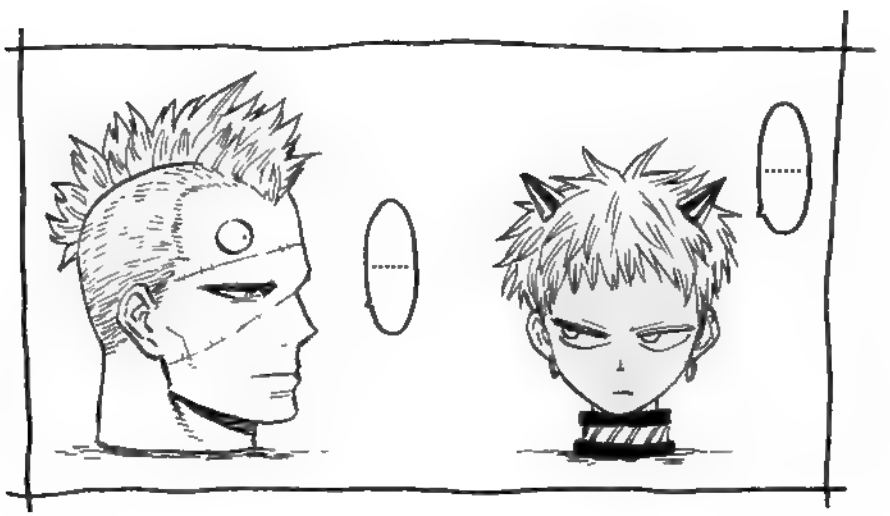
AKIM'S LATEST CREATION.
HIS NAME'S AMBER.
HIS ESTIMATED MAGIC LEVEL... IS 96,800 ORGAN...
96800 org
scanning...
AKIM IS ALREADY DIVIDING HIS MAGIC BETWEEN HIS TWO EXISTING CREATIONS...
YEAH ...
THAT'S AN IMPOSSIBLE NUMBER...
THAT'S INSANE ...! OVER 90,000 !?
!
82020
SO AKIM'S MAGIC LEVEL SHOULD BE AROUND HERE NOW...
193020
OUT OF 193,020 ORGAN... HE GAVE ONE 57,000 AND ONE 54,000.
54000
57000
BUT THE FRESHLY MADE AMBER...
...HAS MORE POWER THAN AKIM HAS LEFT HIMSELF.

IT'S THE SAME THING EVERY TIME.
AND THAT CAN ONLY MEAN ONE THING...
PURAN (DANGLE)
I GUESS KELLY ALONE IS NO MATCH FOR YOU...
HMM.
THIS GAME ISN'T ANY FUN.
...ARE YOU SURE?
IT MIGHT NOT BE MUCH OF A GAME, BUT...
BURGUNDY'S NOT BACK YET THOUGH... OH WELL.
LOOKS LIKE YOU'LL HAVE TO PLAY WITH PAPA. ☆
...I MIGHT BREAK YOU, PAPA.
WITH MY POWER ...

GO AHEAD AND TRY.
FU (VANISH)
O (VOOM)
THIS...
...IS AKIM'S NEW LEVEL, WHICH I ALSO RECEIVED...

269200





BLOOD LAD

CHAPTER 62 ♠ THIS WORLD IS FULL OF MONSTERS

WHAT A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP.
FUAA (YAWN)
OH...
SOMETHING SMELLS YUMMY ...
GOOD MORNING.
HOKA (STEAM)
HOKA
HOKA
WHAAAT IS IT?
VEGETABLE SOUP. I GATHERED THE INGREDIENTS FROM AROUND HERE.
KUN (SNIFF)
KUN
HMM ...
TASTY.
I'VE GOT CHEESE TOO— WANT SOME?
WITH BREAD ...
YES.

.....
DO YOU UNDERSTAND THIS SITUATION?
Y'KNOW... YOU'RE A LITTLE TOO TRUSTING.
...
JUST A MINUTE.
PAT!...
YOU WANT ME TO FIND THE WEAKNESS IN MY OPPONENT'S DEFENSES WITHOUT SHOWING ANY OF MY OWN, RIGHT...?
...I KNOW.
SHE'S JUST A CAT'S-PAW FOR AKIM— THE ONE WHO WANTS TO KILL YOU.
THAT GIRL... DOESN'T EVEN HAVE ANY DEFENSES.
MOGU- (MUNCH) モグ" MOGU モグ"
I'M NOT SURE I CAN THOUGH...

.....HRRM...
...AND I THINK...
...MAYBE SHE HAS NO WEAK POINTS AT ALL...

JUST YESTER-DAY...
HEY, SO HOW COME YOU LIVE OUT HERE?
HUH?
THERE'S NOTHING OUT HERE.

WHAT'S THERE TO DO?
I'M BORED.
...WELL, I CAN'T HELP THAT...
MAN... I WANNA GO SOMEWHERE WITH MORE DEMONS.
GORON (FLOP)
ゴロン
WREAK SOME HAVOC, YOU KNOW?

THAT SURE WOULD BE FUN...
THAT'S NOT FUN...
NOT EVEN A LITTLE BIT...
GU (CLENCH)
WHAT IS IT?
THAT'S WHY I LIVE IN A PLACE LIKE THIS...
.....
IT'S NOT FUN AT ALL...
THERE MIGHT NOT BE MUCH HERE...
BASA
BASA (FLAP)

...BUT I'VE MADE FRIENDS HERE I COULDN'T MAKE ANYWHERE ELSE.
THAT GIRL...
WHAT'RE THOSE?
...ARE THEY FUN?
.....
FRIENDS?

...THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT MAKES HER DANGEROUS...
SHE'S SO TOTALLY REMOVED FROM THE WORLD... EVEN MORE THAN ME.
NEVER MIND WEAK POINTS. SHE'S GOT NOTHING AT ALL.
IF SHE HAS A WEAKNESS, THAT'S WHERE IT LIES...
...THE PARENT IS AN ABSOLUTE POWER.
TO A CHILD, IGNORANT OF BOTH GOOD OR EVIL...
ISN'T IT LIKE YOU TAUGHT ME...?
WHAT IS...?
BUT, MASTER ...
THIS ISN'T EASY ...
...THEN FIND A WAY TO COEXIST INSTEAD OF TRYING TO HOLD IT BACK...
IF THERE'S A BEAST THAT YOU CAN'T HANDLE ON YOUR OWN...
IT'S THE SAME AS BACK THEN...

I'M ABLE TO COEXIST WITH THE BEAST INSIDE ME.
ER, PATI... THAT'S NOT QUITE...
SO I'M SURE THERE'S A WAY THAT SHE AND I CAN BOTH SURVIVE.
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING...? THAT IS—
HEY!
OH— SORRY ABOUT THAT! I'LL GET IT RIGHT NOW!
WHERE'S THAT CHEESE?
UMM ...
I SAID I'D SHOW HER THAT IT'S NICE TO HAVE FRIENDS.
ACTUALLY, I PROMISED TO DO SOMETHING TODAY.

PATI ...
...TOO KIND-HEARTED TO LIVE A DEMON'S LIFE...
...YOU ARE...
...MAY VERY WELL ONLY GET YOU HURT...
THAT VERY KINDNESS ...
AND THAT DAY IS SURE TO COME.
THERE'S NOT THAT MUCH TIME LEFT UNTIL THE APPOINTED DAY...

FIFTEEN DAYS LEFT

LEVEL OF AKIM'S MAGIC: 278,900

THE ONE THING WE DO KNOW IS...
OUR JOB IS TO DETERMINE THAT.
EVEN THE POWER OF THE THREE BLACKLISTED COMBINED IS NOWHERE NEAR A MATCH FOR AKIM.
...THAT THE WAY THINGS ARE NOW, THERE'S NO WAY WE CAN WIN.
.....HEY... WHAT AM I S'POSED TO DO WITH THIS...?
...AKIM'S OWN TRIO STANDING IN OUR WAY.
...AND AMBER ...
...BUR-GUNDY ...
AND ON TOP OF THAT, WE'VE GOT KELLY...
WHAT? IS THERE SOMETHING ELSE?
?
TRUE, IF YOU ONLY LOOK AT THE SUPER-FICIAL DATA...
AGAIN, THIS SITUATION IS NOTHING SHORT OF HOPELESS.
B·T·R
PRISON
YES... BENEATH THE SURFACE.

IT'S POSSIBLE THAT AKIM HASN'T MANAGED...
...TO MAKE GRIMM'S MAGIC ENTIRELY HIS OWN.

HE MAY NOT BE AWARE OF IT HIMSELF...
...BUT THAT TRANSFORMATION IS MAKING ITSELF MORE AND MORE APPARENT...

BUT LATELY, EVERY SO OFTEN, HE DOES...

HE DIDN'T ALWAYS USE THE ROYAL "WE."
THE WAY AKIM TALKS, FOR INSTANCE ...
...HOW, EXACTLY?

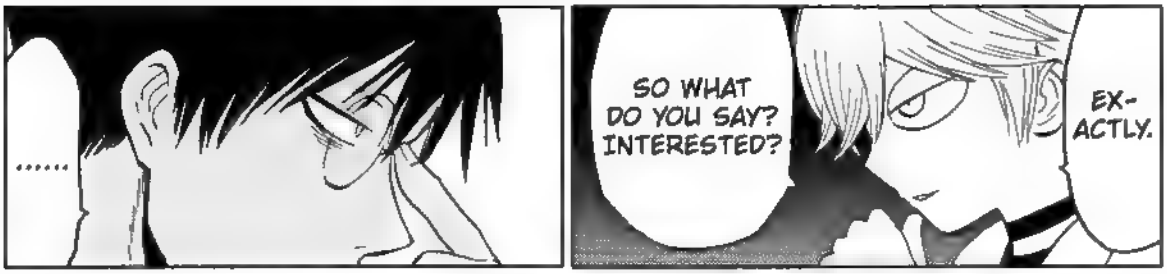
AND TAKE THE NAMES OF HIS "CHILDREN" ...
KACHA
KACHA (CLINK)
SERVANTS OF THE KING, AND NAMED FOR COLORS... WHO ELSE DOES THAT REMIND YOU OF?
KELLY, BURGUNDY, AMBER— EACH ONE IS NAMED FOR A COLOR.
THEN THERE'S HIS HAIR—
IT'S BEGINNING TO LOOK THE SAME AS THAT OF THE LATE HERRSCHAFT GRIMM.
...KNOWN AS THE DEMON COLORS.
THE KING'S PERSONAL TASK FORCE...
HIS COLORFUL CHILDREN, ONE MIGHT SAY.
HERRSCHAFT GRIMM FIRST ESTABLISHED THAT TASK FORCE.

EXACTLY... AND WE CAN'T KNOW FOR SURE WHAT CONDITION AKIM'S PERSONALITY IS IN NOW... HOWEVER...
...I BELIEVE IT IS WORTH INVESTI-GATING.
.....
...SO THAT MEANS AKIM IS...
ガラッ
GARA (SLIDE)
!
WHO ARE YOU ...!?
I SEE...
IF THAT'S HOW IT IS, WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO JOIN FORCES.
PIN (PLUCK)

YOU TWO HAVE THE SAME GOAL IN MIND AS WE DO.
SERVE UNDER AKIM IN ORDER TO STRIKE AT HIM... ISN'T THAT RIGHT?
...WERE YOU... JUST LISTENING TO...?
YES... I APOLOGIZE, BUT I'VE BEEN EAVES-DROPPING ON YOU FOR SOME TIME NOW.
...WE HAVE SOMEONE WHOSE ABILITIES ARE PERFECTLY SUITED TO FINDING OUT WHAT'S GOING ON INSIDE AKIM...
IN FACT, ON OUR SIDE...
YOU LOST YOUR HEAD... SO I THOUGHT I MIGHT HELP...
OH— UM...IT'S JUST...
WHAT... IS THAT?
IF YOU NEED ANY...
I DON'T.

OH... VERY WELL...
しゅん
SHUN (DROOP)
HE CAN BE A LITTLE FLAKY, BUT...
...IF HE MANAGES TO DO HIS JOB, WE'LL FIND OUT EXACTLY WHAT COMPONENTS AKIM IS MADE OF.
DON'T TALK TO ME.
I'M IN A BAD MOOD RIGHT NOW.
THE READER'S POWER CAN ONLY ACTIVATE UNDER A CERTAIN CONDITION ...
...BUT SINCE YOU'RE PROPOSING AN ALLIANCE WHEN YOU ALREADY HAVE SOMEONE WITH THAT POWER, THAT MEANS...
YOU CATCH ON QUICK.
I SEE...
HE NEEDS A PIECE OF THE TARGET'S BODY...
AT LEAST TWENTY STRANDS OF HAIR, IF POSSIBLE.
AND HE HAS TO INGEST IT.

...CAN MAKE UP A REASON TO OBTAIN IT. IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE SAYING?
YOU TWO, ON THE OTHER HAND...
BUT FOR US TO GET A LOCK OF HIS HAIR IS A PRETTY TALL HURDLE.
RIGHT ...
YOU MEAN... IF HE SWALLOWS IT, HE CAN READ AKIM'S COMPO-SITION?
...IN-GEST ...?


.....
SO WHAT DO YOU SAY? INTERESTED?
EX-ACTLY.

オオ
VERY WELL. WE ACCEPT ...
OOOOO (LOOOM)
オオ

ドオ
DOOON (STOMP)
ン

ZUN
ズン
HEEEY, WHAT'S THE MATTER!?
殺
KILL
(ZUN (BOOM)
ズン

HFFF ...
HFFF ...

WEREN'T YOU GONNA KILL US DEAD OR SOMETHIN'?

FU (DODGE)
BUN (VOOM)
ブン

ZUN
ZUN
BWAAAR!
...HM.
YOU LOOK TIRED. WHY DON'T I RUB YOUR SHOULDERS?
TON (PERCH)
HM...
LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE MAKING PRETTY GOOD PROGRESS.
HA HA.
...OH. RIGHT.
HEY... THAT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A SECRET.
ALL THANKS TO US.
FUYUMIN.
STAZ AND WOLF...AND MY SISTER TOO...
LOOKS LIKE THEY'VE DONE SOME GROWING ...

CAN I HELP YOU WITH THE DISHES?
OH... THANKS, I'M FINE.
I'M ALMOST DONE. YOU CAN TAKE IT EASY.
STOP KEEPING ME AT A DISTANCE LIKE THAT.
AND THE SAME THING WITH STAZ!
..... WHA?
OH, C'MON. I CAN DO DOMESTIC STUFF TOO, Y'KNOW.
THAT'S NOT...SORRY. I JUST THOUGHT YOU MUST BE TIRED.
I'M NOT THAT TIRED!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE SO CAREFUL ANYMORE.
WITH ME, AND EVERYONE ELSE... OKAY?

DID SOMETHING HAPPEN? THIS IS COMING OUT OF NOWHERE...
WELL, WHAT I'M TRYING TO TELL YOU IS...
.....
JUST DO WHAT YOUR HEART TELLS YOU.
...YOU SHOULD KEEP ON STICKING WITH STAZ THE WAY YOU'VE BEEN DOING.
FUYUMIN ...

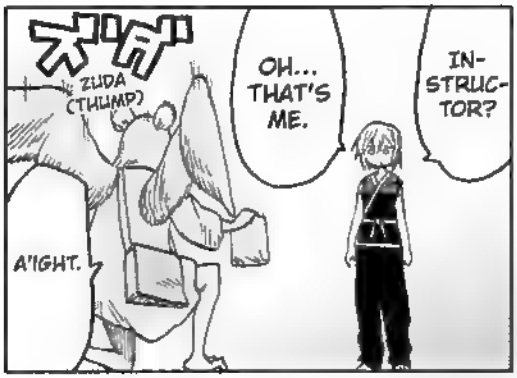
ZUULIN (BOOOOM)
.....
GOT IT?

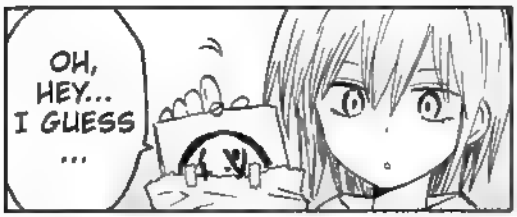
WHAT, WE'RE DONE ALREADY?
CAN WE GET AN EXTEN-SION?
... UP...
FUU
FUU
... IS...
TIME ...
FUU (HFF)
FUU

BASA
BASA
HUH?

BASA (FLAP)
BASA
IT'S ABOUT TIME WE GOT GOING.

MONSTERS...
FUU
FUU
JUST MESSING WITH YOU.





BOOK: INSTRUCTOR'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

BOOK: INSTRUCTOR'S SECRET NOTEBOOK

...YOU HAVE A MAP...?
HUH?
YO... ALSO THIS ...
SURE, WHEN YOU FORGOT THAT PART YOURSELF UNTIL A MINUTE AGO...
IT'S NOT A PREMISE! I'M LITERALLY YOUR INSTRUCTOR!
THAT PREMISE'S GETTING OLD.
SO? WHAT'S IT SAY?
FINE, WHATEVER.
Step 2
Head for the place on the map Staz is carrying!
.....
ヒミツの教官ノート

OH, RIGHT, SIS—YOU DIDN'T EVEN KNOW ABOUT THE MAP.
OUR BIG BROTHER MADE IT! HOW COULD YOU FORGET!?
I TOTALLY FORGOT ABOUT IT.
WHAT THE...? WHERE IS THIS S'POSED TO BE?
.....
OH, YEAH. THIS THING.
THAT'S HOW WE ENDED UP HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE...
...LIKE HE KNEW WHERE IT WAS...
WELL, GRAMPS KINDA SOUNDED ...
?
IT SAYS... STAZ AND WOLF ARE TO CLIMB USING SPECIAL HIKING GEAR.
YEAH... IT LOOKS LIKE ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS CLIMB THE MOUNTAINS OUT BACK OF THIS HOUSE...
SO WE CAN FINALLY TAKE A STEP FORWARD, HUH?
EXCEPT ...
UHHH ...
UM...IS IT OKAY IF I SIGN FOR IT...?
SO WHERE'S THAT STUFF?

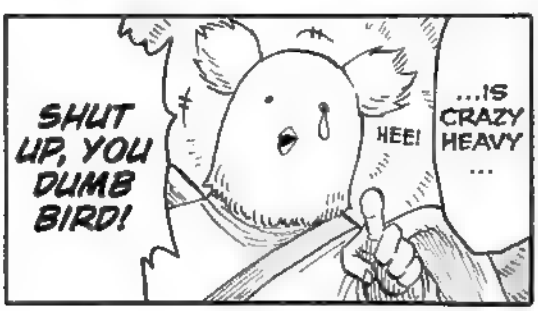
BOOK: TOP SECRET

AW, MAN, I LIKE THIS UNIFORM ...
IT SAYS THE GEAR SHOULD BE IN THIS SHED...
ヒミツの秘宝ハト
GII (CREAK)
ギィ oo
NOW, WHERE IS IT...?
OOH!
ハイキング セット A
HERE WE GO! THERE'S ENOUGH FOR EVERY-ONE!
ME...AND FUYUMIN AND KNELL AND THE TEN—ER, AND LIZ-CHAN.
BOX: HIKING GEAR SET A
GO GO GO GO GO
ゴゴゴゴゴ
ハイキング セット ス
ハイキング セット ウ
... AREN'T THEY KINDA BIG?
.....SO THAT MEANS ...
GO GO GO GO GO (DUM)
ゴゴゴゴゴ
ハイキング セット ス
ハイキング セット ウ
ARE THOSE... OURS?
BOXES: HIKING GEAR SET S / HIKING GEAR SET W

YEAH, YOU ALWAYS LIKED STUFF LIKE THIS.
AH!
AHHH! ♡
PAAA (GLOW)
IT'S SO EASY TO MOVE IN!
LIZ-CHAN, YOU LOOK SOOO CUTE!!
.....
IT'S JUST THE SAME AS YOURS, FUYUMI.
ZUN (STOMP)
KYA
THAT'S WHAT MAKES IT SO CUTE!
KYA (SQUEAL)
IT'S A BIT BIG FOR ME.
RIGHT!?
...HEY.

HUFF!
HUFF!
HUFF!
IS THIS FOR REAL?
BABAAAN (DADUUUM)
HUFF!
HUFF!
LOOKS LIKE YOU GUYS ARE HAVIN' FUN.

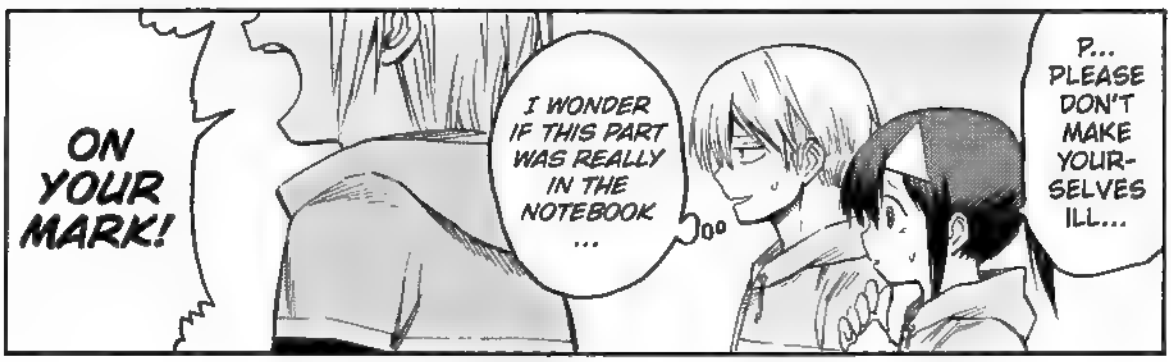
YEAH, LAUGH IT UP...BUT Y'KNOW... THIS STUFF...


SHUT UP, YOU DUMB BIRD!
HEE!
...IS CRAZY HEAVY ...

HIKING GEAR!!
BWA HA HA HA!

SFX: GERA (CHORTLE) GERA
YEAH, THAT'S PUTTIN' IT LIGHTLY...
SO WHAT? IT'S HEAVY?
WE COULD SERIOUSLY DIE TRYING TO GO UP A MOUNTAIN IN THESE.
AND IT'S HOT...
OTHER-WISE, I WOULDN'T HAVE SEEN THAT!
SURE AM GLAD I STUCK AROUND!
HEEE!
OKAY, THAT'S PRETTY FUNNY. LEMME SIGN THAT...
LET'S THROW SOME ROCKS AT THAT GUY NEXT TIME...
BASA
BASA (FLAP)
WHOO-HOO!
...HAVE TO RACE TO THE REST STATION.
OH, SO BY THE WAY... IT SAYS THE TWO OF YOU...
SOUNDS JUST RIGHT TO ME. PRETTY STRAIGHT-FORWARD FOR TRAINING.
THE WINNER GETS THE WATER SUPPLY, AND THE LOSER HAS TO DO A HUNDRED PUSH-UPS.
WHA?

GO COLUMN
ゴゴゴゴ…
GO
GO
GO
ALL RIGHT, GUYS— GO FOR IT!


ON YOUR MARK!
I WONDER IF THIS PART WAS REALLY IN THE NOTEBOOK …
P… PLEASE DON'T MAKE YOUR-SELVES ILL…

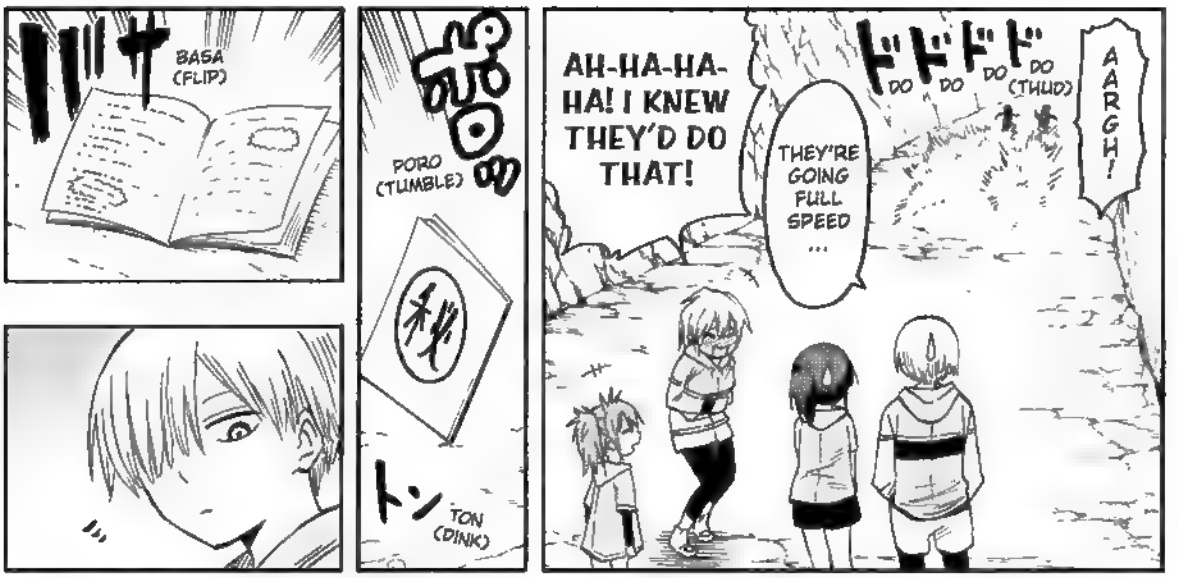
GET SET!
LET'S TAKE IT SLOW.
YEAH... WE'LL MAKE IT A TIE.

DA (DASH)
BANG!!

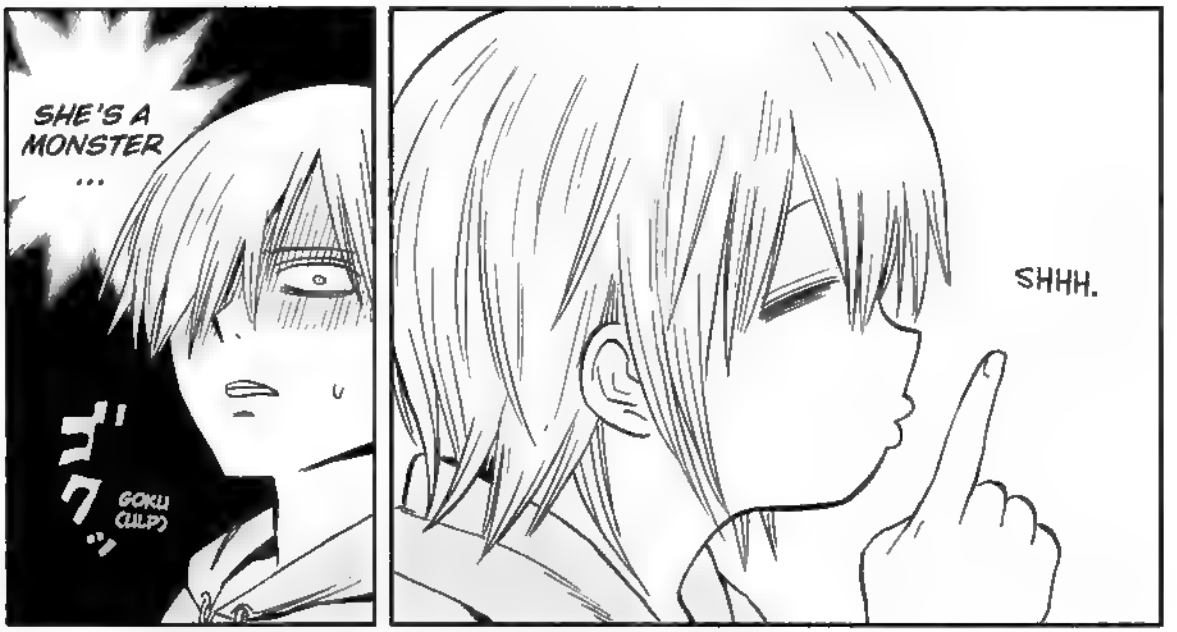
DO (THUD)
DO
DO
DO
YAARGH!
THAT WATER'S MIIINE!

GASSHA (CLUNK)
GASSHA
NYUU

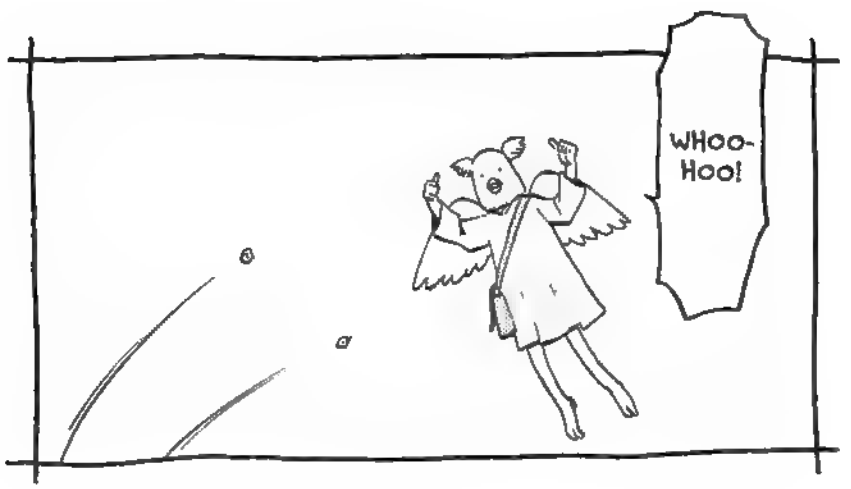
GASSHA
UUUU



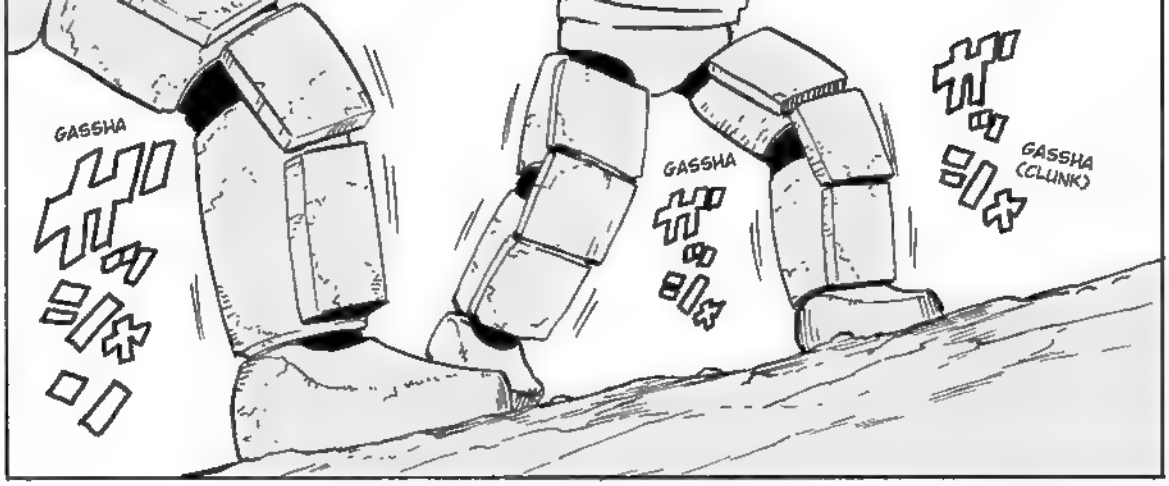
BOOK: TOP SECRET



♠ To Be Continued ♠


WHOO-
HOO!

BLOOD LAD



CHAPTER 63 ♠ CHOOSING THEIR OWN PATHS

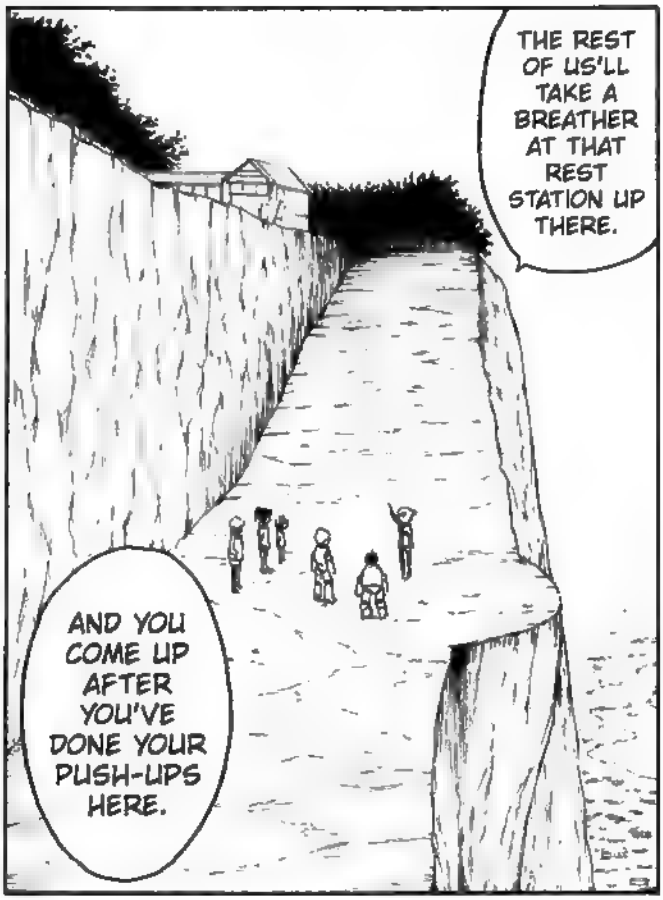
NNGH ...
6!
7!
5!
2!
3!
GUH ...
DA (DASH)
YAAAH!
GASHA (CLUNK)
4!
1!
DO (CRASH)
RAAAH!!

MADE IT!!
...IT'S A TIE...
WHAT THE!?
BAN (BOOM)
WOLF WINS!!
BOTTLE: WATER
YOU DID SOOO GOOD! DRINK UP!
YES, YES!
(HUFF!)
(HUFF!)
W... WATER
YOU KEEP YOUR MOUTH SHUT!!
BISHII (JAB)
UH... HEY, SIS?

GO
GO
GO (GULP)
HUH?
GIMME WATER ... TOO...
NO CAN DO. YOU LOST, SO YOU BETTER GET STARTED WITH THOSE HUNDRED PUSH-UPS.
...G—
BOTTLE: WATER
GOOD LUCK ...
KARA (EMPTY)
カラ
...WITH THOSE PUSH-UPS.
AHHH. THAT'S GOOD.
PUHA (GASP)
OKAY, THEN. ANYWAYS ...
TOO BAD FOR YOU.
OH. STAZ.
WOLF ...
YORO
YORO (TOTTER)
LEMME ... HAVE ...

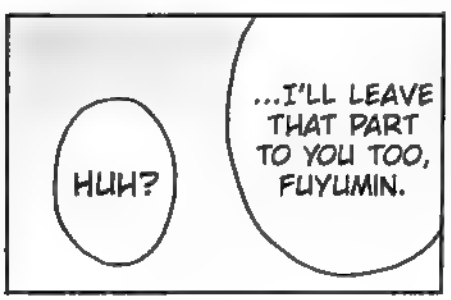
FUYU-
MIN.

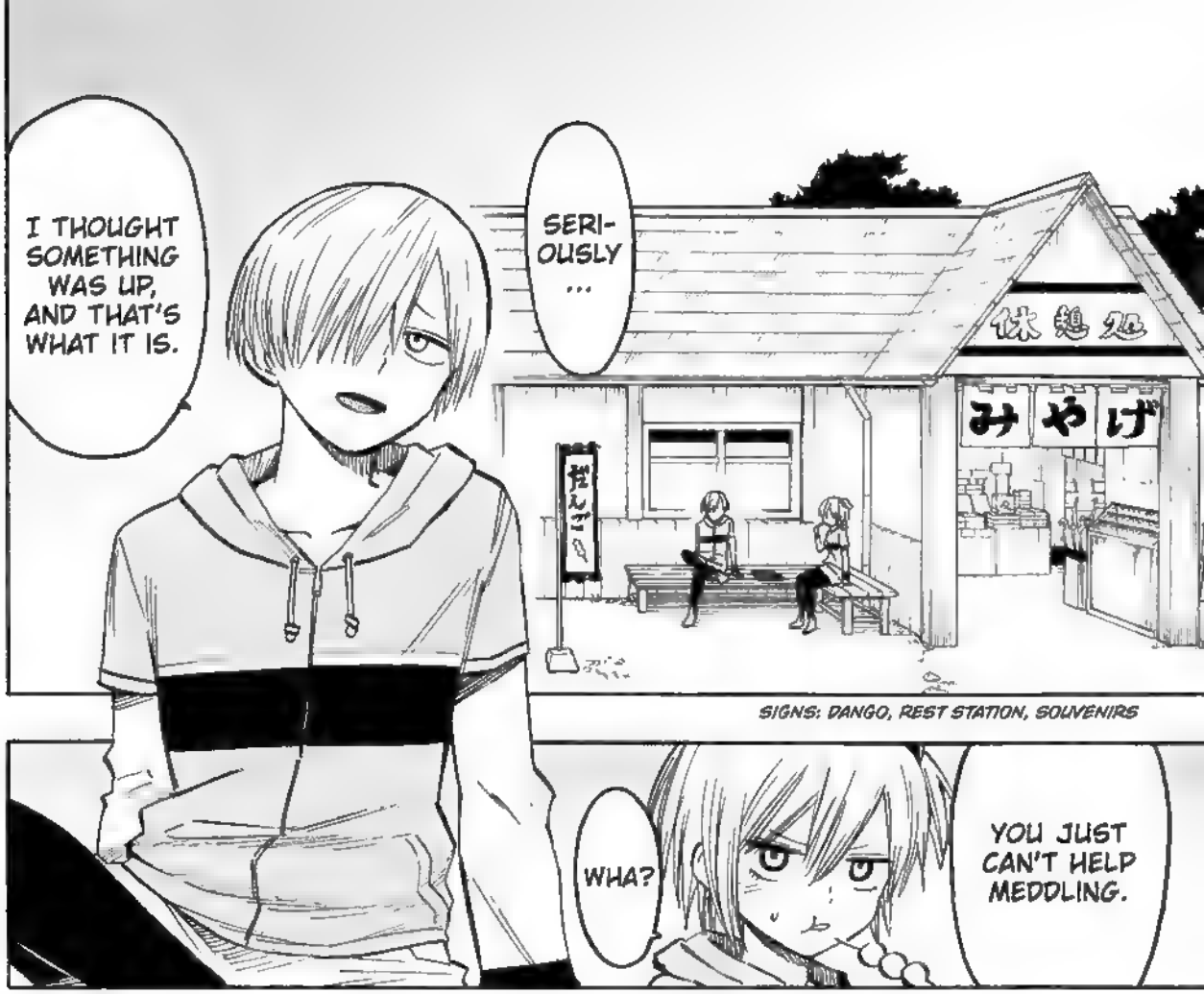
SORRY TO PUT THIS ON YOU, BUT COULD YOU STAY AND MAKE SURE STAZ DOES ALL HIS PUSH-UPS?
HERE, HE CAN HAVE THIS WHEN HE'S DONE.
OH... YES, I CAN DO THAT, BUT...

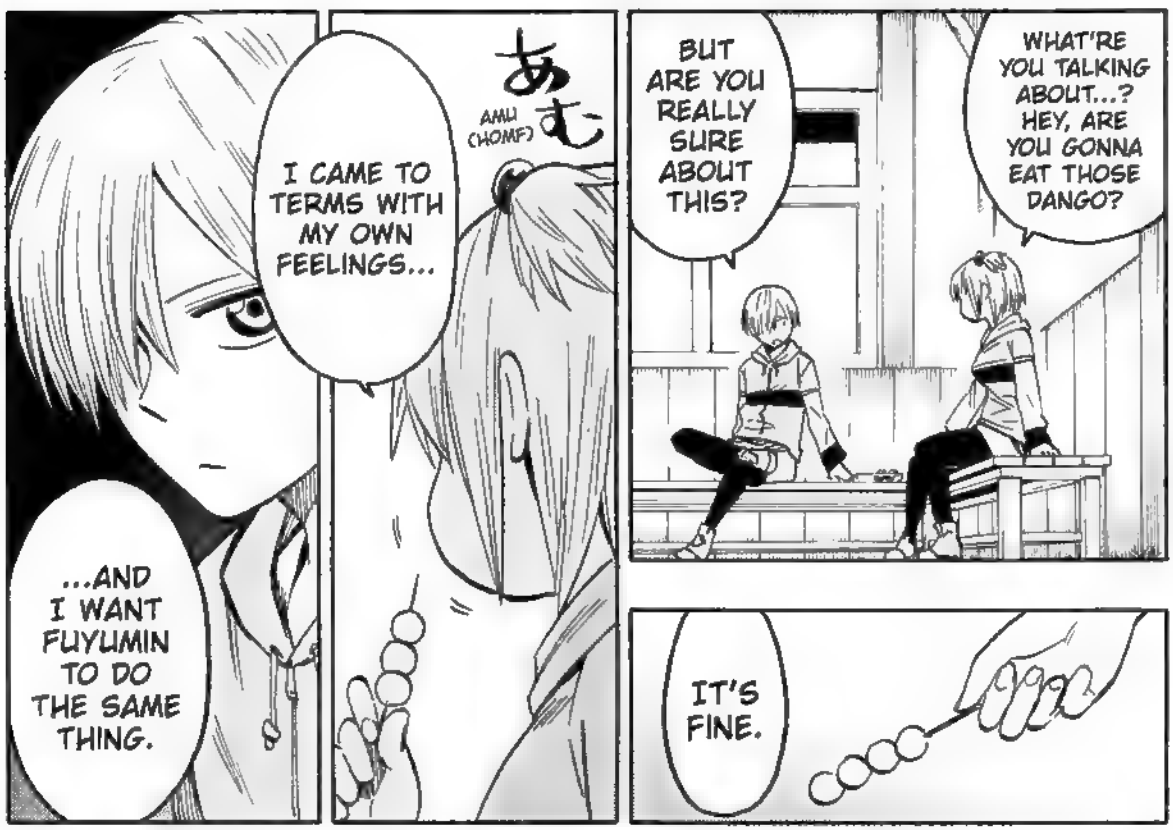

THE REST OF US'LL TAKE A BREATHER AT THAT REST STATION UP THERE.
AND YOU COME UP AFTER YOU'VE DONE YOUR PUSH-UPS HERE.

... WELL, I GUESS ...

...H...HE REALLY HAS TO... DO A HUNDRED PUSH-UPS?
AND I CAN'T... GIVE HIM ANY WATER UNTIL HE'S DONE...?


HUH?
...I'LL LEAVE THAT PART TO YOU TOO, FUYUMIN.

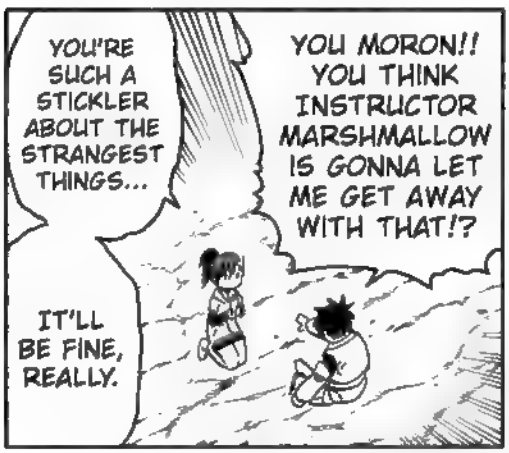

I THOUGHT SOMETHING WAS UP, AND THAT'S WHAT IT IS.
SERI-OUSLY ...
休憩処
みやげ
だんご
SIGNS: DANGO, REST STATION, SOUVENIRS
WHA?
YOU JUST CAN'T HELP MEDDLING.


I CAME TO TERMS WITH MY OWN FEELINGS...
あむ
AMU (HOMF)
...AND I WANT FUYUMIN TO DO THE SAME THING.
BUT ARE YOU REALLY SURE ABOUT THIS?
WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT...? HEY, ARE YOU GONNA EAT THOSE DANGO?
IT'S FINE.

BOTTLE: WATER

I MADE IT THIS FAR. I'M GONNA DO THIS...
NO WAY AM I DRINKIN' THAT WATER 'TIL I'M DONE...
GASHA (CLUNK)
I CAN'T DO THAT ...
DANG IT...
HFF! HFF!
I SAID YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THEM.
JUST DRINK THE WATER ...
(HUFF!)
(HUFF!)
THIS STUPID HIKING GEAR... WASN'T MADE TO DO PUSH-UPS IN AT ALL.

BOTTLE: WATER


YOU'RE SUCH A STICKLER ABOUT THE STRANGEST THINGS...
YOU MORON!! YOU THINK INSTRUCTOR MARSHMALLOW IS GONNA LET ME GET AWAY WITH THAT!?
IT'LL BE FINE, REALLY.

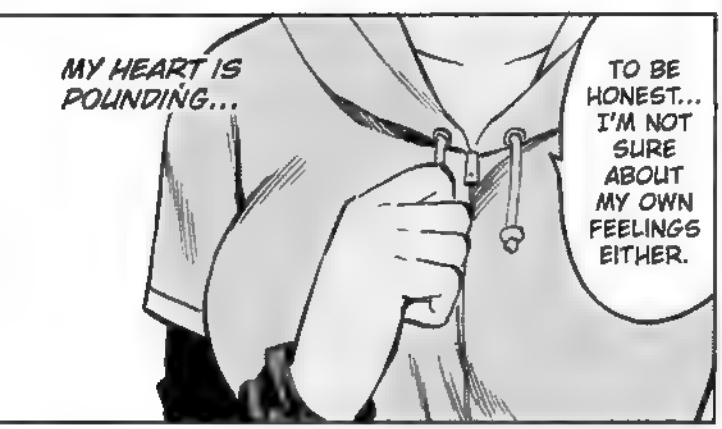
YOU'RE ALL SOAKED WITH SWEAT. YOU NEED A WIPE-OFF.
NOW TAKE IT ALL OFF.
OKAY.
I...I GUESS?
HUH?
...OR ELSE YOU'LL GET A COLD.
...
HERE. USE THIS.
ふう
FUU (SIGH)
WHAT'S THAT ALL ABOUT?
HUH. THAT'S AWFUL NICE OF YOU.
I THINK BETTER OF YOU NOW.
YOU'RE TINY, BUT YOU'RE WORKING AS HARD AS YOU CAN.

NEXT TIME, DON'T MAKE IT SO CLOSE.
DON'T LET STAZ BEAT YOU.
NAH, IT'S NOTHIN'. ...THANKS.
...THIS TINY ONE THINKS I'M "TINY" ...
WHAT'S THAT?
.....YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME THAT.
PER-FECT...
HEE HEE.
LOOKS LIKE THE LITTLE INSTRUCTOR IS TURNING INTO A WOLF TAMER.
SHE'S UP TO SOME-THING AGAIN...
OOOH.
ガシャ
GASHA (CLUNK)

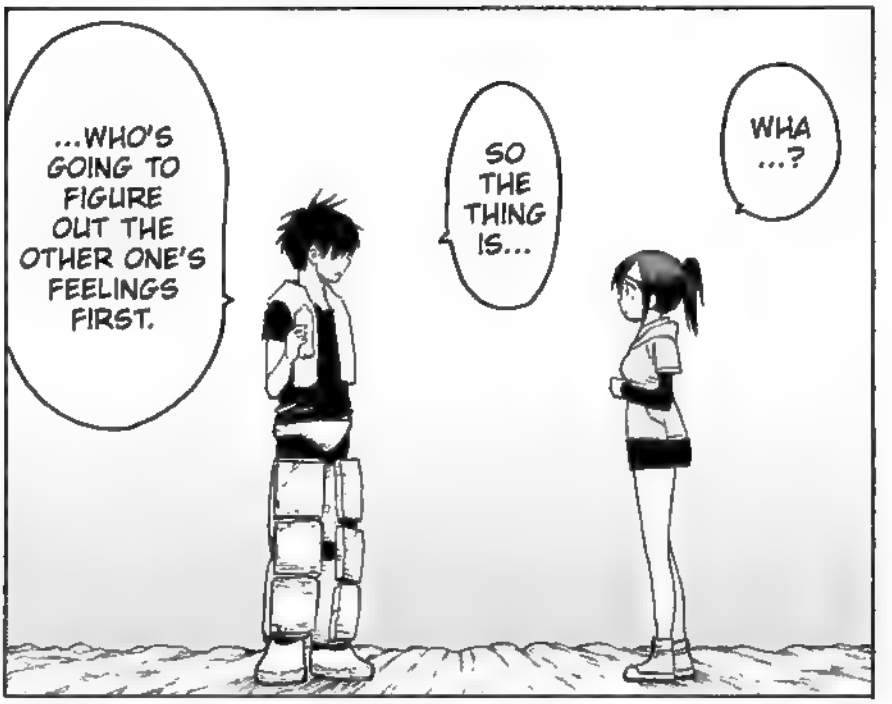
IS IT ABOUT TIME FOR YOUR BLOOD DONATION OR SOMETHING?
WH—
THAT'S NOT IT!
YOU'RE TAKIN' SUCH GOOD CARE OF ME ALL OF A SUDDEN.
SO NOW WHAT'S GOING ON?
STAZ-SAN, I...
ALL RIGHT... IF YOU DON'T NEED IT YET, FINE.
JUST HOLLER WHEN YOU WANT SOME.

BOTTLE: WATER

WHAT AM I TO HIM...?



BUT IS THAT ONLY BECAUSE...



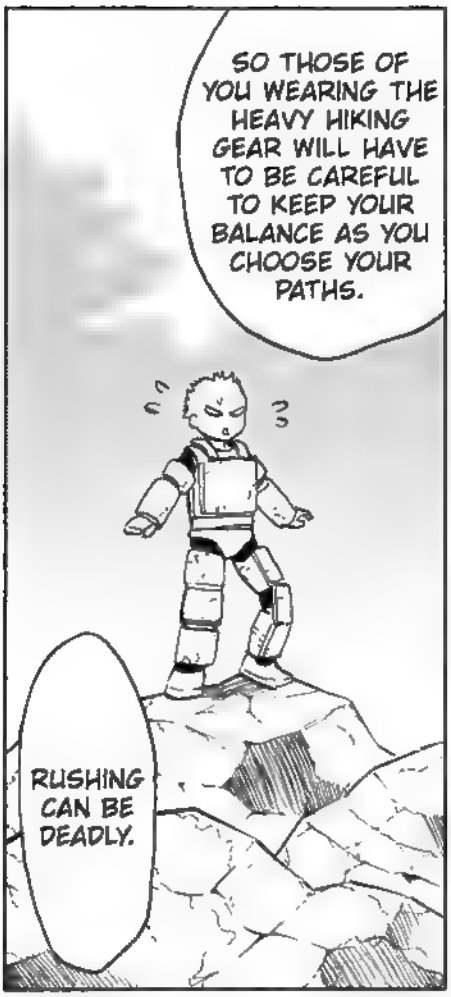
...I WANT HIS BLOOD...?

.....
'COS THAT'S WHAT THIS TRAINING IS ALL ABOUT.
I'M DEFINITELY GONNA FIGURE OUT YOUR FEELINGS FIRST.
...N... NO...
HM? DID I SAY SOMETHING WEIRD?
OHH...YOU'RE ALWAYS SO OVER THE TOP AND PREDICTABLE, STAZ-SAN.
YOU SAY ALL THIS STUFF... BUT YOU'RE ALREADY READING MY MIND...
WHAT'S THAT MEAN!?
!
WHAT'S WITH THAT "MAN, I KNEW HE'D DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT" LOOK...!?
NOT WEIRD FOR YOU, STAZ-SAN...
... HEY ...
WELL, I'LL BE WAITING FOR YOU UP THERE.
I'LL BE ROOTING FOR YOU.
YOU JUST KEEP GOING AND TRY TO READ MY MIND.

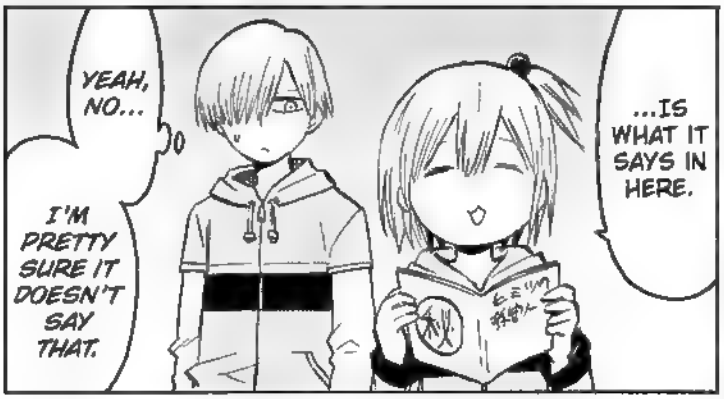
ガッシャ
GASSHA
ガッシャ
GASSHA
ガッシャ
GASSHA
NOW YOU'RE MAKING EVEN LESS SENSE THAN BEFORE! DAMMIT!
HOW COME YOU SOUND SO MEAN ALL OF A SUDDEN!?
WAIT UP —!!
GASSHA (CLUNK)
ガッシャ
GASSHA
ガッシャ
あむ
AMU (CHOMP)
YEAH?
HUFF!
HUFF
...I'M SORRY...
ONCE I STARTED RUNNING, I DIDN'T WANT TO LOSE...
ズォーン
ZUUUN (COLLAPSE)
HUFF! HUFF! HUFF!
SO HE DID THOSE HUNDRED PUSH-UPS ...
...AND YOU BOTH SPRINTED UP HERE, HUH...?

WELL, WHATEVER.
I WAS JUST ABOUT TO EXPLAIN THE RULES OF THE NEXT STAGE OF HIKING TRAINING.
OH— YES.
IT'S YOU AGAINST ME, FUYUMI.

WHA?
THIS TIME, WE'RE GOING TO SPLIT INTO TEAMS OF TWO PEOPLE EACH.


SO THOSE OF YOU WEARING THE HEAVY HIKING GEAR WILL HAVE TO BE CAREFUL TO KEEP YOUR BALANCE AS YOU CHOOSE YOUR PATHS.
RUSHING CAN BE DEADLY.

RIGHT... THERE AREN'T ANY MORE STEEP HILLS FROM HERE ON OUT, BUT...
...THE TERRAIN IS GOING TO BE PRETTY ROUGH.


YEAH, NO...
I'M PRETTY SURE IT DOESN'T SAY THAT.
...IS WHAT IT SAYS IN HERE.

HOWEVER— IF YOU WENT TOGETHER, YOU TWO WOULD JUST PICK YOUR WAY ACROSS...
...HELPING EACH OTHER OUT THE WHOLE WAY. WHERE'S THE FUN IN THAT?

VS
THIS TIME, IT'S A TEAM RACE.
SO YOU'RE GOING TO SPLIT UP, EACH TAKING ALONG A DIFFERENT PARTNER.

HE FOUND THE HOLE IN YOUR PLOT...
HM? WELL... I GUESS THAT'S TRUE.
YOU ARE ABSO-LUTELY RIGHT...
AHEM.
WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO NOW, SIS?

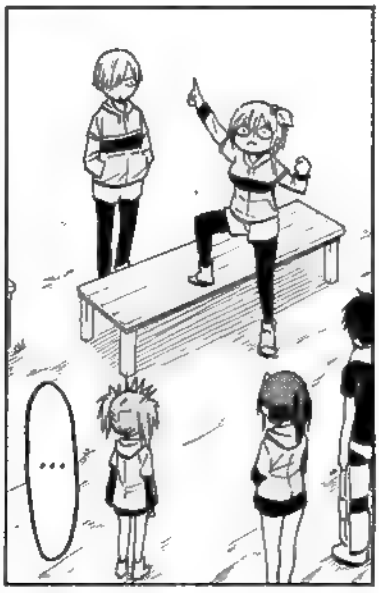
WAIT A MINUTE.

OOH.
HOW CAN IT BE A RACE IF WE'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO HURRY?
IF YOU DON'T HURRY, YOU LOSE.

ONE MUSTN'T JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS!
E... EXACTLY.
!
SO... IT'S NOT?
I'M ABOUT TO TELL YOU!
I—
THEN HOW DO WE WIN?
WHY DID YOU DIG YOURSELF INTO A HOLE LIKE THAT...?
UMMM ...?
BUT WHO SAID IT'LL BE THE FASTEST TEAM THAT WINS?
SIS...!?
SOOO! ♪
?
WE'RE CAMPING TODAY...! EVERYONE IS CAMPING OUT!
SHE SAYS, LIKE SHE JUST THOUGHT OF IT...
GATA (STAND)
OH! THAT'S IT!

THE TEAM THAT BRINGS THE BEST INGREDIENTS WINS!
BAAAAN (BOOOM)
WE'RE GOING TO NEED SOMETHING TO EAT...!

YEP!
...WE HAVE TO GO HOWEVER FAR IT TAKES TO FIND SOMETHING THAT LOOKS EDIBLE?
SO YOU'RE TELLIN' US...


...

AND NOW SHE'S SAYING "HOW 'BOUT IT?"
HOW 'BOUT IT? SOUNDS PERFECT, RIGHT!?

YOU WILL HAVE THREE HOURS!!
THE FINISH IS THAT GIANT TREE UP THERE!

'COS I GOT THE MASTER CHEF ON MY TEAM.
UM...
NAH... WE'RE GOOD.
ANY OBJEC-TIONS!?
SEE YOU IN THREE HOURS, THEN.
ス..
SU (PWIP)
MUN (POSE)
ムン
GONNA BEAT YOU!
WE'RE GONNA BEAT YOU WITH MOBILITY.
WE'RE GOOD TOO.
BA (FLING)
ALL RIGHT, LET THE SECOND STAGE OF THE HIKING CONTEST...
...BEGIN!!
KNELL AND I WILL BE WAITING AT THE FINISH LINE WITH READY APPETITES!
SHE SAYS, AFTER SHE JUST ATE ALL THOSE DANGO...

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT!?
THAT WAS CLOSE ...
ズル
ZURU (DRAG)
WHOA!
CRAP... I THOUGHT IT'D BE EASIER NOT HAVING TO RUN...
...BUT THIS IS ITS OWN BRAND OF TORTURE ...
トッ
TO (TMP)
I'LL LOOK FOR THE FLATTEST ROUTE.
UH... OKAY.
THE WEIGHT ITSELF IS PULLING ME.
JUST GO SLOWLY AND DON'T TRY TO OVERDO IT.

CAN'T YOU FIND A PATH THAT'S, Y'KNOW, FLAT!?
SFX: SAKU (CRUNCH) SAKU
BABY!? YOU'RE THE ONE STANDIN' THERE MUNCHIN' ON KIDDIE SNACKS!!
DON'T BE SUCH A BABY.
BOX: CHOCOLATE ANIMAL SHAPES
YOU'RE TELLIN' ME I HAVE TO JUMP DOWN THAT!?
HEY! JUST A MIN-UTE!
YOU'RE HOLDING US BACK. HURRY UP.
JUST FIND SOMETHING THAT LOOKS EDIBLE.
OKAY, NEVER MIND NAVIGATING.
I DON'T WANT ANY...
IF YOU CAN MAKE IT OVER HERE, YOU CAN HAVE ONE.
OH! MORE MUSH-ROOMS!
... WHICH WAY?
OKAY... THAT'S GREAT ...
WHICH WAY SHOULD I GO?
HFF! HFF! HFF!
STAZ-SAN, I FOUND SOME MORE MUSH-ROOMS!
OH!

デロ〜ン
DEEEN (LAZE)
AHHH...

...BUT, UH...

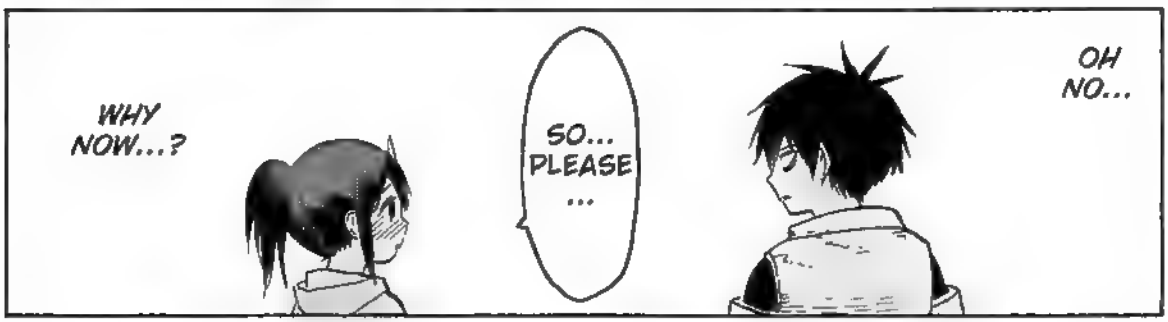
I SET UP THE TENTS, SIS.
OH, THANKS.
THIS SURE IS A NICE SPOT, HUH?
I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW THERE WERE PLACES LIKE THIS IN THE DEMON WORLD.

ALL THOSE BAGUETTES AND PÂTÉ AND EVERY-THING...
ISN'T EVERYONE GOING TO BRING FOOD SOON?
C'MON, DON'T GIVE ME THAT.
HM? WHAT STUFF?
... WHERE'D YOU GET ALL THAT STUFF?
OH... WOULD YOU MIND SLICING THAT LOAF?
PASHI (GRAB)
...UGH.
I MEAN, THERE'S NOTHING MUCH FOR THEM TO FIND ON THE WAY HERE BESIDES MUSHROOMS ANYWAY.
AW, IT'S FINE.
LOOK, THERE'S CAVIAR TOO.
DON'T SAY I DIDN'T WARN YOU...
GASA (RUSTLE)
!

I CAN SEE FLAT TER-RAIN!
WHAT !?
STAZ-SAN!
YEAH, I KNOW, MORE MUSH-ROOMS.
NO, NOT THAT!
OOOH.
NICE NAVIGATING, FUYUMI.
HEE-HEE... I HAVE THE POWER TO SENSE THINGS.
GUH ...
UNLIKE A CERTAIN GOOFBALL.

WELL... STAZ-SAN, YOU'RE JUST BEING TOO NICE TO ME LATELY...
... YES.
WHAT FOR!?
IS THAT SOME KIND OF STRATEGY TO THROW ME OFF!?
YOU SURE ARE TAKING POTSHOTS AT ME TODAY!
IF ANYTHING, IT FELT LIKE YOU CARED ABOUT MY SKULL MORE THAN ABOUT ME...
?
UP UNTIL A LITTLE WHILE AGO, YOU WERE PRETTY THOUGHTLESS WITH ME...
AND YOU... ASK HOW I'M DOING...
YOU'RE REALLY PROTECTIVE ...
.....
BUT NOW...

YOU'RE THE ONE THROWING ME OFF, STAZ-SAN.
DOKUN (BAMBUMP?)
OHooo
...THE WRONG WAY...
AND I'M GOING TO END UP TAKING IT...


WHY NOW...?
SO... PLEASE ...
OH NO...

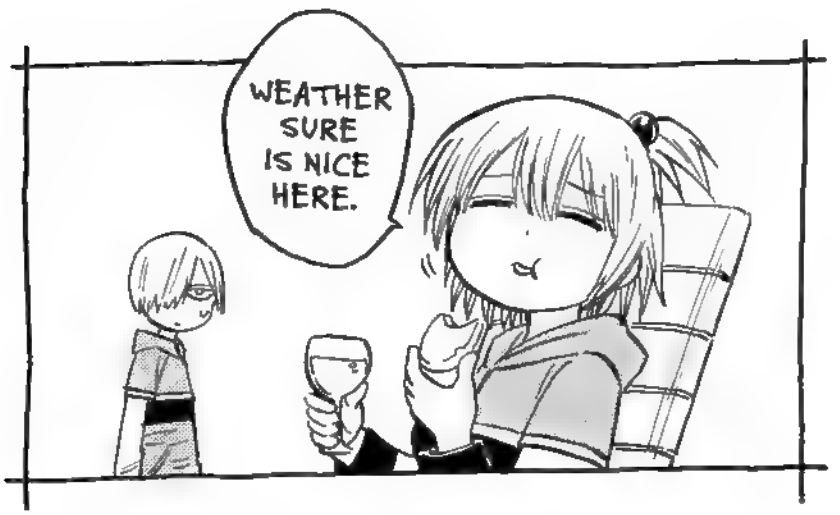
HUH?
TAKE IT OFF...
I NEED HIS BLOOD...

スゥ
SUU (VANISH)
ドサ
DOSA (WHUMP)
WHA ...?
HEY!?
SERI-OUSLY!?
!
I'M SORRY...
OHH...
YOU... HAVE THE WORST TIMING ...
GASSHA (KACLUNK)
...EVEN REALIZE IT YOURSELF ...?
DO YOU...
HOLD ON, I'LL GIVE YOU SOME.
...STAZ-SAN...
GARI (BITE)

...
I'M...
...
THROW-
ING YOU
OFF...?

ちゅぽん
CHUPON (POP)
THOSE CONDITIONS YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT...
...AREN'T YOU EVEN LISTENING TO YOURSELF...?
WELL, THE ONE YOU KEEP MEETING 'EM FOR IS FUYUMIN...
GASA (RUSTLE)
GASA
.....

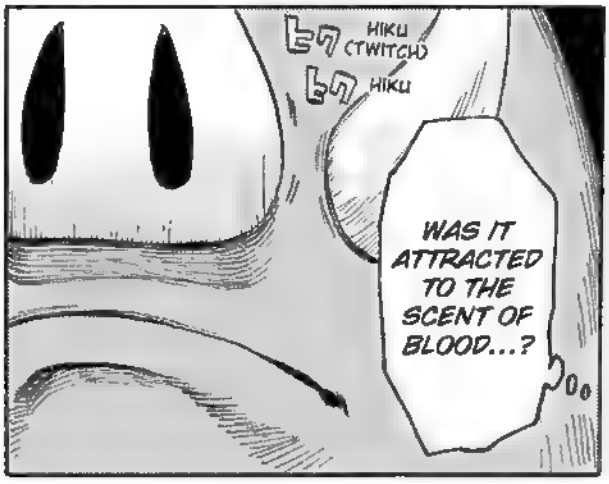
♠ To Be Continued ♠


WEATHER SURE IS NICE HERE.

BLOOD LAD

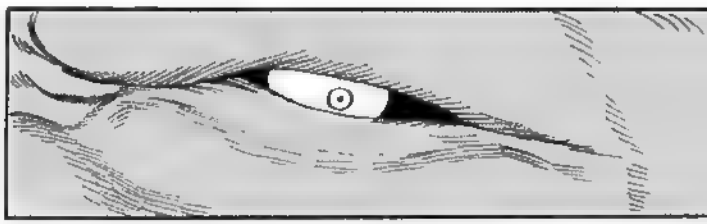
CHAPTER 64 ♠ THE WORLD OF THE WEAK

ズン
ZUN (STOMP)


ヒク
HIKU (TWITCH)
ヒク
HIKU
WAS IT ATTRACTED TO THE SCENT OF BLOOD...?

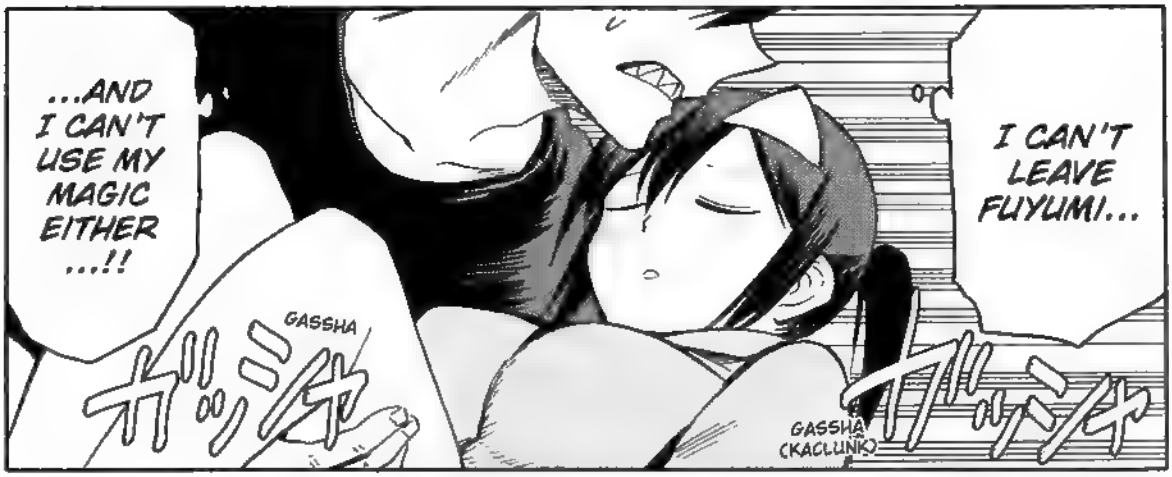
WHAT THE HECK IS THAT...?
IT'S HUGE!

ZARI (CRUNCH)

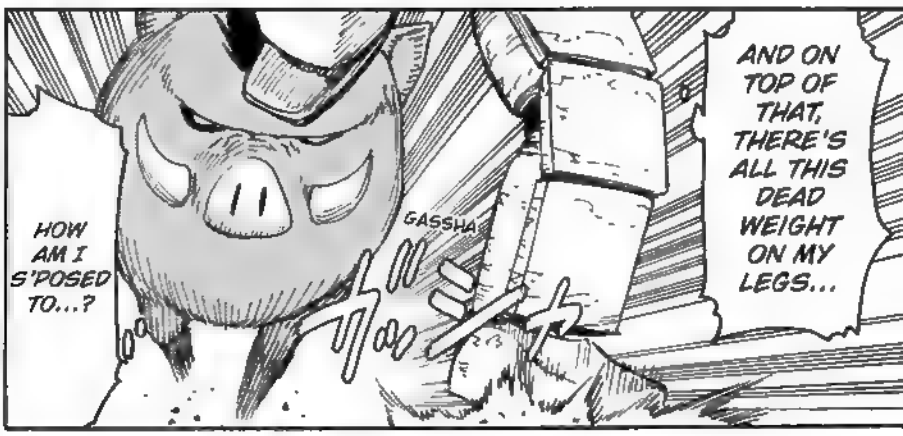


BUFUU (SNORT)
ZA (KTCH)
ZA
DA (CHARGE)
BA (JUMP)

THIS IS BAD ...
HOW DO I GET OUT OF THIS ONE...?
DO (GALLOP)


...AND I CAN'T USE MY MAGIC EITHER ...!!
GASSHA
I CAN'T LEAVE FUYUMI...
GASSHA (KACLUNK)

HOW DO I GET AWAY?

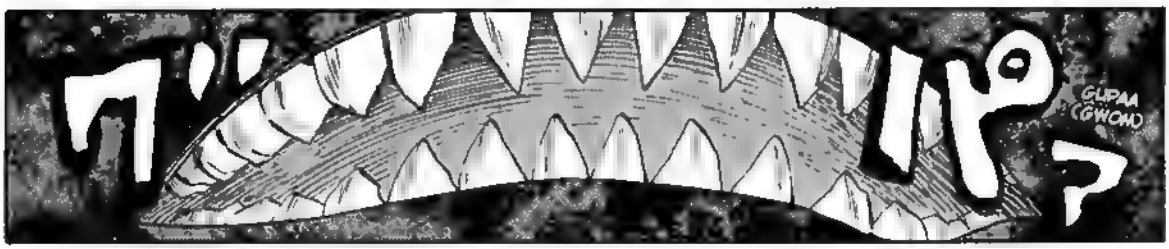

HOW AM I S'POSED TO...?
GASSHA
AND ON TOP OF THAT, THERE'S ALL THIS DEAD WEIGHT ON MY LEGS...

DON (WHAM)

GUA
(LIFT)
!
DOSA
(THUD)
KUH!
ZUN
(STOMP)
DO
(THUMP)
FUYU-
MI!!

STAZ...
SAN?

ヌ
ウ
(WHIRL)
(LOOM)


パ
(GUPAA)
(GWOM)

...THIS
IS...

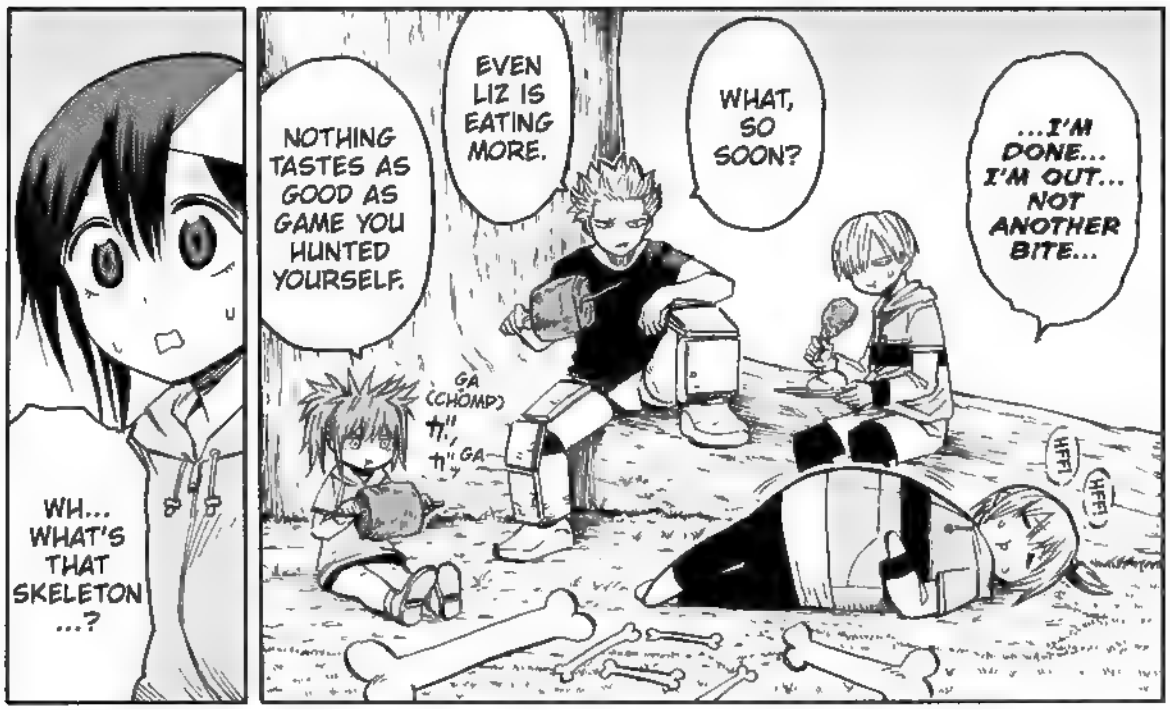
...THE WORLD OF THE WEAK.
ooo (RUMBLE)
ガサ ガサ
GASA (RUSTLE)
GASA
ドド
DO
DO
DO (CHOOM)
!!?

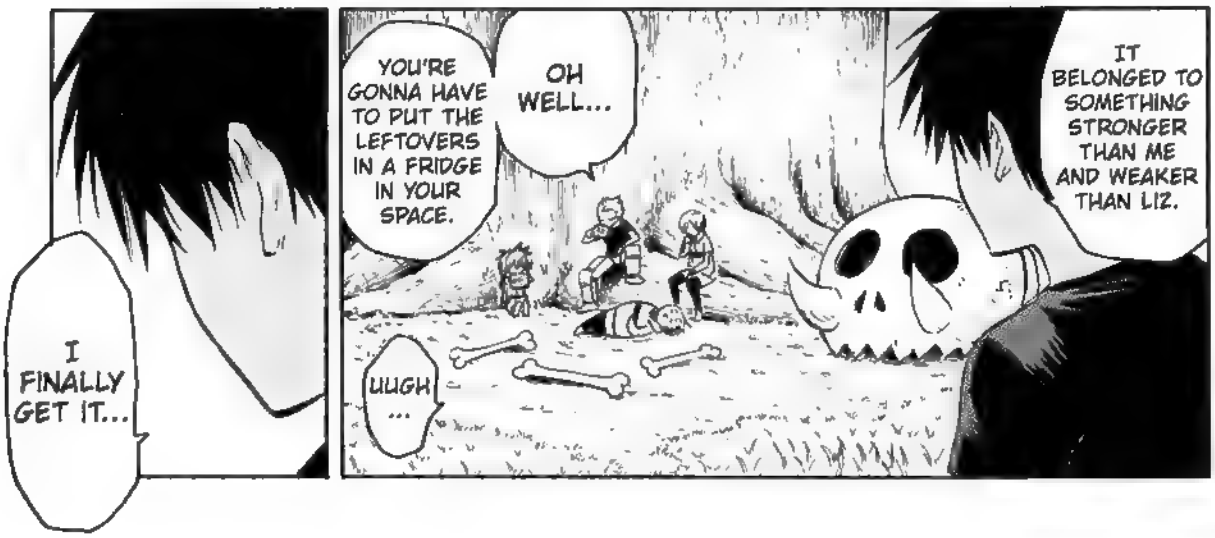
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, STAZ?
ZUZUUUN (CRAAASH)
ZA (STEP)
ZU (ZMMM)
ZU...
SO MUCH TROUBLE WITH A DUMB THING LIKE THAT... PATHETIC.
I CAME THIS WAY LOOKING FOR SOMETHING EDIBLE.
...ARE YOU DOING HERE...!?
...LIZ... WHAT...

WHA ...?
AND I BROUGHT DOWN THAT THING...
...SO IT'S MY TEAM'S CATCH.
WHA ...?
DEDEEEN (TA-DAAA)
デデーン
WHATCHA THINK, BELL?
THIS IS WHAT OUR TEAM'S MOBILITY DOES.

SO... HOW... ARE WE GONNA EAT THAT THING?
WHAT DID I TELL YOU ...?
UPU (BURP)
Y... YEAH. NICE WORK ...
SO IT'S PRETTY CLEAR WE WIN, YEAH?
PACHI
PACHI (CRACKLE)
GOO (BURN)
MM...
WE LOST.
HUH ...?
HEY... YOU'RE AWAKE.
MUKU (RISE)
HUH...? I...

JAAAN
(TA-DAA)
NAH... WE LOST BY MORE THAN THAT.
I...I'M SORRY. IT'S MY FAULT.


WH... WHAT'S THAT SKELETON ...?
NOTHING TASTES AS GOOD AS GAME YOU HUNTED YOURSELF.
EVEN LIZ IS EATING MORE.
WHAT, SO SOON?
...I'M DONE... I'M OUT... NOT ANOTHER BITE...
GA (CHOMP)
GA
(HFFI)
(HFFI)


I FINALLY GET IT...
YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO PUT THE LEFTOVERS IN A FRIDGE IN YOUR SPACE.
OH WELL...
UUGH ...
IT BELONGED TO SOMETHING STRONGER THAN ME AND WEAKER THAN LIZ.

...WHAT THE OLD MAN WAS TALKING ABOUT. THE WORLD OF THE WEAK.
THAT WAS THE FIRST TIME I EVER REALLY FELT IT...

WHEN WE'RE TRAINING... NOT BEING ALLOWED TO ATTACK...
THAT'S JUST A RULE.

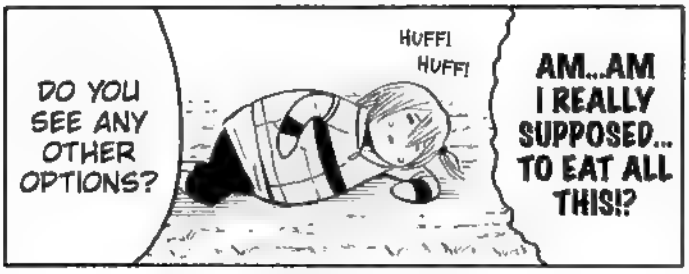
?

NO POINT IN PLAYING THE MODEL STUDENT IF STICKING TO THE RULES GETS YOU KILLED.
OBVIOUSLY, IF IT CAME DOWN TO THAT, I'D PUT OUR LIVES ABOVE THE RULES.
BUT...

AND IF I GOT GOBBLED UP BECAUSE I WASN'T STRONG ENOUGH TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT...
...THEN I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO SAVE YOU.
WHAT IF I REALLY WASN'T GOOD ENOUGH TO DO THAT?
... THEN I REAL-IZED.
...AND MY DEATH WAS CREEPING UP FROM BEHIND ME...
YOU WERE ON THE GROUND, BARELY CONSCIOUS IN FRONT OF ME...
WHEN I RE-ALIZED THAT...
...I WAS REALLY SCARED.

HUH!?
でん
DEN (TA-DAA)
HERE'S YOUR SHARE.

... STAZ-SAN, WHAT IS...?
OH.
IT'S DONE.


DO YOU SEE ANY OTHER OPTIONS?
HUFF! HUFF!
AM...AM I REALLY SUPPOSED... TO EAT ALL THIS!?

SO IT'S THAT AGAIN ...
..... OH...

IN THE PAST, I WOULDN'T HAVE GIVEN YOU SUCH GOOD MEAT...
JUST SHUT UP AND EAT.
ずしっ
ZUSHI (HEAVY)
BUT THERE'S JUST NO WAY I CAN EAT THIS MUCH...

I'M JUST GONNA SAY, I DON'T MEAN TO THROW YOU OFF.
AGU (CHOMP)
あぐ

I ADMIT THAT.
O... KAY?
YOU'RE NOT WRONG...
I MEAN, OKAY, MAYBE I'M BEING A LITTLE EXTRA NICE TO YOU LATELY.
I MEAN ...
HUH?

STAZ-SAN, DO YOU THINK OF ME LIKE I'M YOUR PET OR SOMETHING?

BEING NICE TO ME ...?
.....
SO JUST ACCEPT IT AND BE AS YOU ARE.

AS SOON AS I WAKE UP, YOU HAND ME A CHUNK OF MEAT AND TREAT ME LIKE A PET...
WHAT? YOU WANT MORE?
YOU THINK I'D BE JUST FINE WITH THAT?

UGH, THIS ONE'S STILL NOT DONE.
AND WHAT DO YOU MEAN, BE AS I AM?
HEY ...
I'M GONNA COOK IT A BIT MORE.
STAZ-SAN?

...FINE. ALL RIGHT.
HERE. SIT, FUYUMI.
WHAT'S THE MATTER? I'M BEING NICE TO YOU, SO LET'S JUST AGREE IT'S A GOOD THING, OKAY?
PON (PAT)
PON
I CAN'T TELL WHEN IT STARTED...
BUT YOU'D BETTER BE SUPER-NICE TO ME.
EVERYTHING DEPENDED ON ME.... OR IT DID...
FUYUMI COULDN'T STAY ALIVE WITHOUT ME.
...BUT OUR SITUATIONS GOT REVERSED.
.....'KAY.

ぽむ
POMU (PAT)
THERE YOU GO.
MOCHI (MUNCH)
もちもち
MOCHI
.....
HOW IS IT? GOOD, HUH?
NADE なで
NADE (PET) なで
OH... YES.
.....
.....
.....
NAH... IT'S KINDA AWKWARD SOMEHOW.
..... WEIRD ...
SORRY... THAT DOESN'T FEEL RIGHT, DOES IT ...?
..... WELL, IT'S OKAY, BUT...
KNELL.

HUH?
I THOUGHT ANYTHING IN THE WORLD COULD BE MINE FOR THE TAKING.
I'M A TREASURE HUNTER, AFTER ALL.
!
I...WAS WRONG...
WHAT, SIS?
I DON'T HAVE ANY REGRETS...
AND I'M GLAD I REALIZED THAT BEFORE I BROKE ANYTHING...
BUT SOME THINGS—IF YOU MAKE THEM YOURS, THEY BREAK ...
I'M JUST SAYING HOW I FEEL. THAT'S ALL!
WHA?
.....
THOSE MUSH-ROOMS WERE POISON. I KNEW IT.
ARE YOU GONNA DIE?
WHOA, WHAT'S ALL THAT ABOUT, MARSH-MALLOW?
THIS ISN'T A DEATH-BED SPEECH.

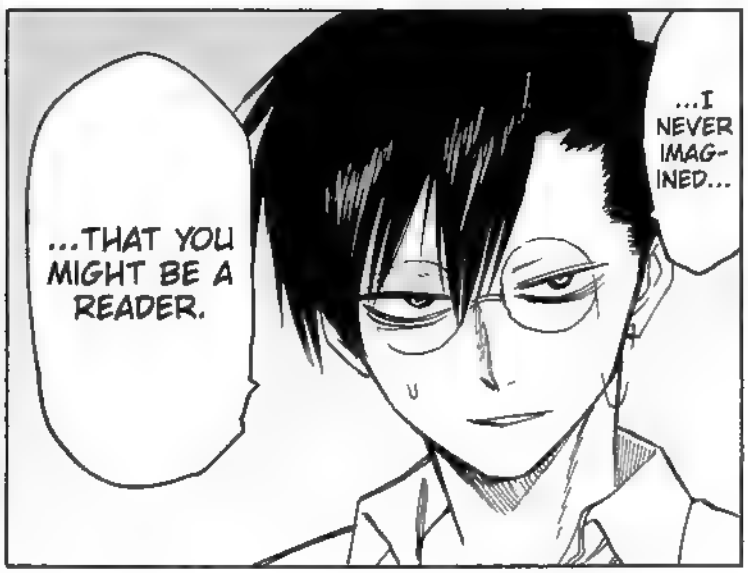
RIGHT... SO LET'S GO AND FIND THE NEXT BIG TREASURE TOGETHER.
SINCE IT'S YOU, I BET YOU'LL BE ABLE TO FIND SOMETHING SOON.
WHAT?
I'M NOT WORRIED ANY-MORE.
SHUT UP! I'M NOT SAYING IT FOR YOU!
SO, WHAT'RE WE S'POSED TO DO ABOUT IT?
I GET IT, SIS ...
OOH.
THERE'S AN IDEA.
I DO NOT!!
DIDN'T YOU SAY YOU HAVE NO REGRETS? DO YOU HAVE SOME BAGGAGE?
HUH?
WH... WHAT'RE YOU SAYING NOW? THAT WAS QUITE A TRANSITION ...
LET'S PUT IT IN A STEW.
I'M TIRED OF EATING ROASTED THINGS THOUGH.
THEN IT'S FINE, RIGHT?
RGH ...

I WOULD ASK THAT YOU REFRAIN FROM INTER-FERING WITH MY WORK!!
I AM VERY BUSY WITH DINNER PREPARA-TIONS!

ηγ GU (BUBBLE)
ηγ GU
WHAT IS IT NOW!?

.....
WELL ...
.....

DID YOU FORGET ABOUT THE WORK WE'RE ACTUALLY HERE TO DO, SHAM?
YOU'VE TURNED INTO QUITE THE CHEF.

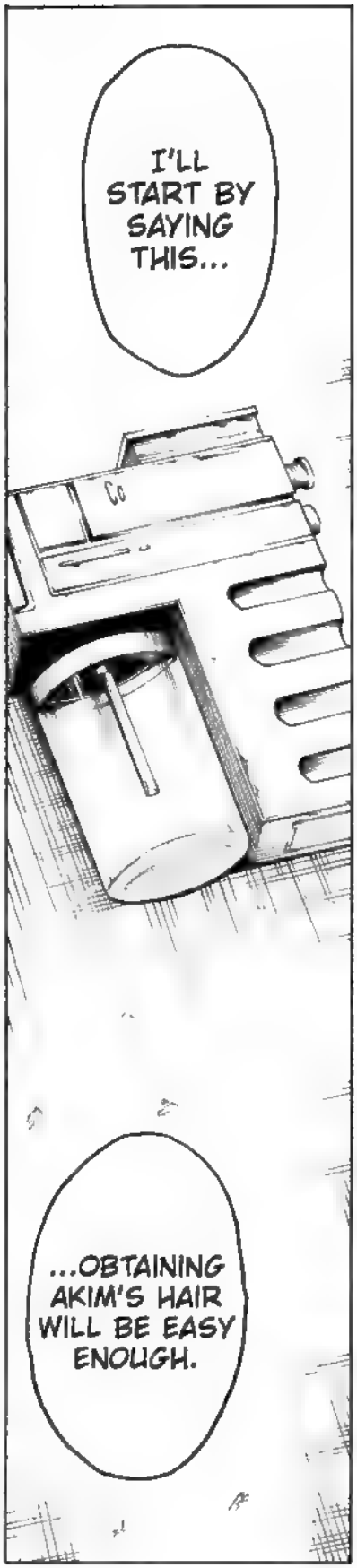

...THAT YOU MIGHT BE A READER.
...I NEVER IMAG-INED...

IT DOESN'T DO MUCH OF ANY-THING.
IT'S JUST SOMETHING I THREW TOGETHER.
WHAT IS THAT... DEVICE ...?

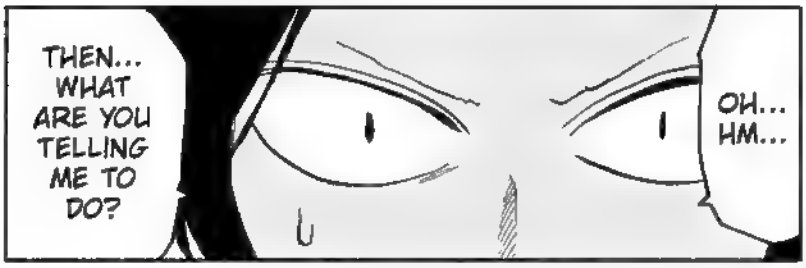
...THAT IT FUNCTIONS AS A READER.
HOWEVER, WE WILL TELL AKIM...

YOU'RE GOING TO REVEAL MY POWERS!?
WHAT !!?

B... BUT...!
CAN WE DO THAT!?
LIKE THE HAIRBALLS. WE'LL LEAVE THAT OUT.
WE WON'T TELL HIM EVERY-THING.


I'LL START BY SAYING THIS...
...OBTAINING AKIM'S HAIR WILL BE EASY ENOUGH.

THIS WILL BE SAFER THAN AN AWKWARD LIE.
AND I EXPECT ...
...THAT AKIM HIMSELF IS MORE EAGER THAN ANYONE TO KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING INSIDE HIM.


OH... HM...
THEN... WHAT ARE YOU TELLING ME TO DO?

IF WE TELL HIM WE CAN ANALYZE THAT, HE'LL JUMP AT THE OPPOR-TUNITY...
...AND HE SHOULD READILY AGREE TO GIVE US A SAMPLE OF HIS HAIR.

THE USUAL.
ONCE BRAZ MANAGES TO PROCURE THE HAIR, ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS EAT IT.

YES... BUT FIRST, I'D LIKE YOU TO TELL ME SOMETHING.
WHEN WE EXPLAIN THIS TO AKIM, IT HAS TO STAND UP TO SOME SCRUTINY...

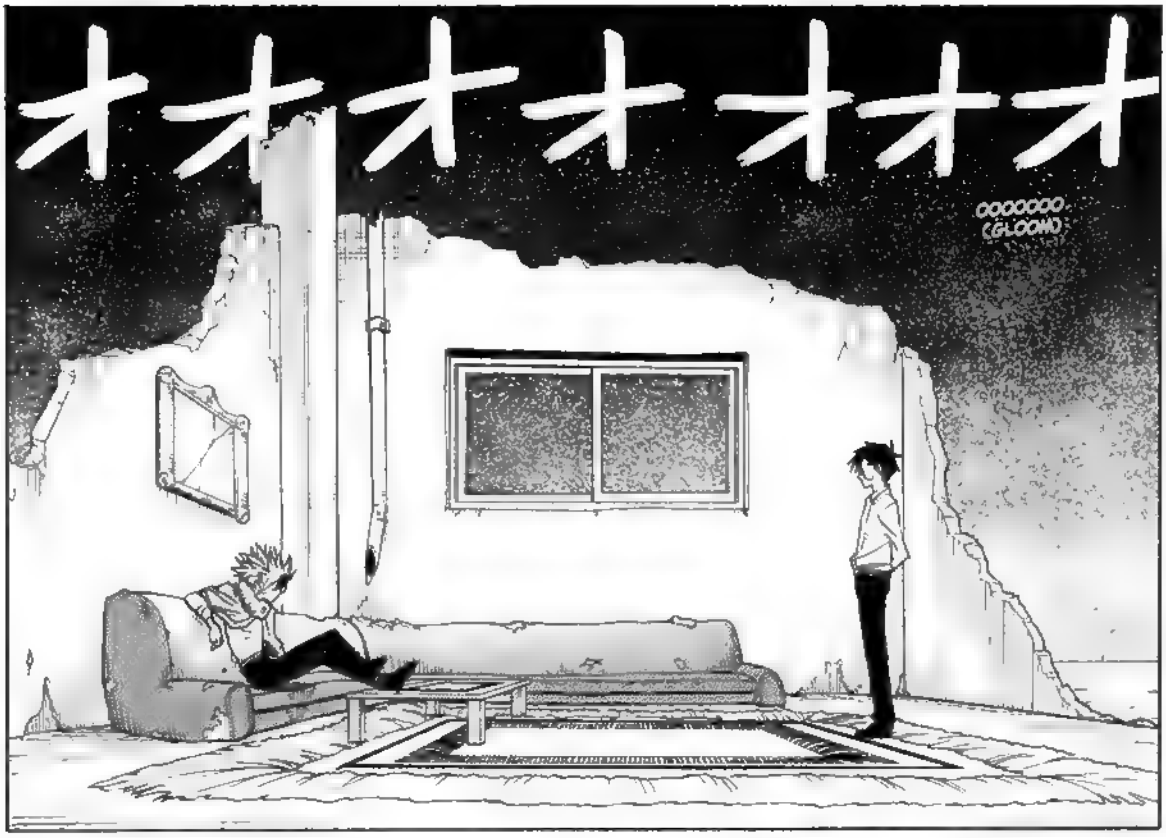
SO JUST HOW MUCH CAN YOUR POWERS TELL YOU ABOUT THE TARGET?
OOO (GLOOM)
DODO
DODO
DODO (GALUMP)

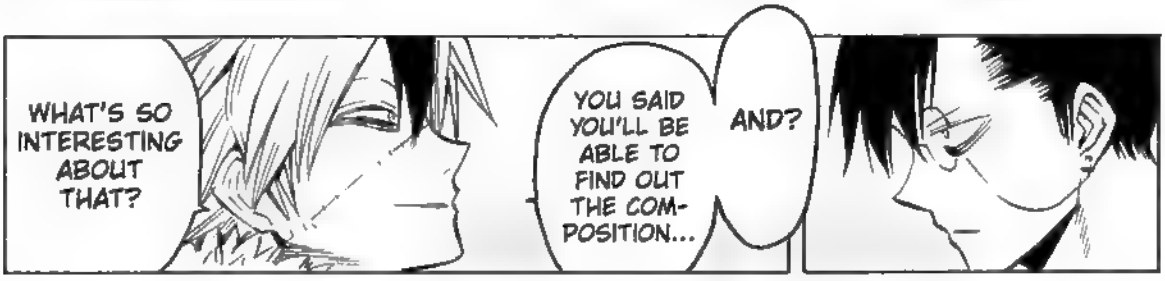
BYU
(CLINGE)
NYOKI
(POIK)
BO
(BOMF)
SU
(DODGE)
BAO
(VOOM)

DO
DO
DO
(CHOOM)
GYUN
(KREEE)
ギュイイイ..
BO
(VOIP)
ボロッ
BUO
(LEAP)
フォオ
PAAN
(GLOW)

WHAT HAPPENED, PAPA...? THEY'RE NOT MOVING.
ARE YOU FEELING OKAY?
ZUDA (THUMP)
THAT'S IT FOR TODAY.
...IT'S NOTH-ING.
.....
SIRE ...
IN THE MEANTIME, WORK ON AN IMAGE OF YOURSELF FIGHTING MORE BEAU-TIFULLY.
YES, PAPA.
I'LL RAISE THE BAR NEXT TIME.

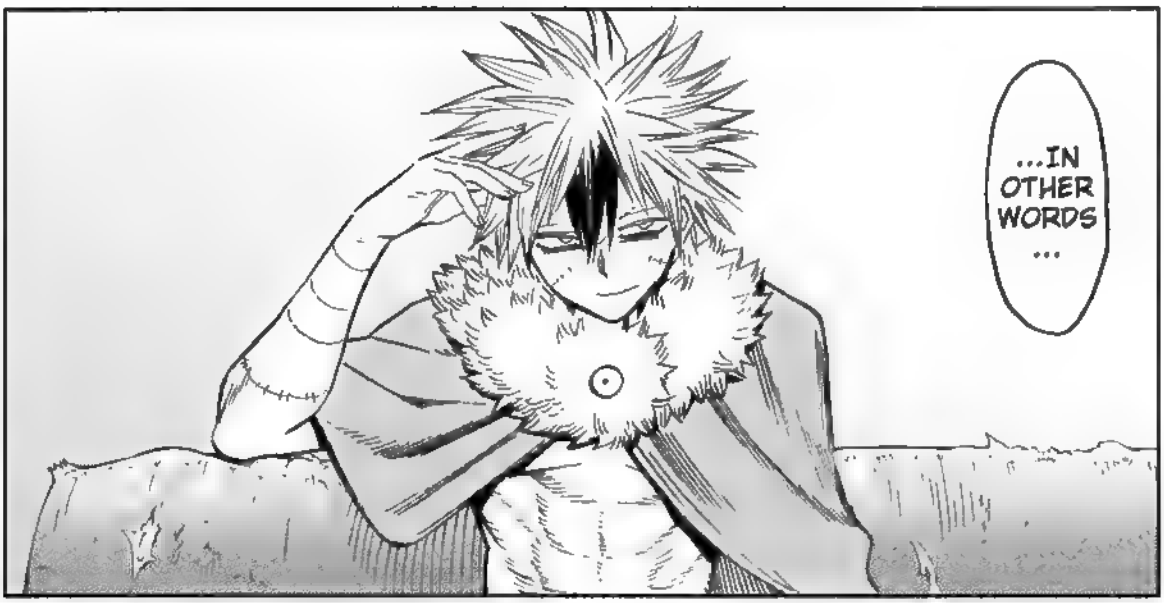
.....
RIGHT NOW...
THIS ONE SAYS HE HAS SOMETHING TO TELL YOU.
HE'S AKIM NOW.
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO SEE ME ABOUT?
SO IT'S YOU, BRAZ ...
WE NEED TO TAKE CARE OF THIS BEFORE HIS PERSONALITY TRANSFORMS ANY FURTHER...
ACTUALLY... I'VE DISCOVERED SOMETHING FASCINATING WHILE MAKING IMPROVEMENTS TO THE MAGIC-MEASURING DEVICE...
SIMPLY PUT, IT'S NOW ABLE TO ANALYZE THE COMPOSITION OF MAGIC.
I FELT IT WAS ONLY RIGHT TO INFORM YOU, SIRE...IN CASE THIS MIGHT INTEREST YOU.
.....
YES...ALL RIGHT, TELL ME MORE.
THANK YOU, SIRE.


ゴゴゴゴゴゴ
(GLOOM)


WHAT'S SO INTERESTING ABOUT THAT?
YOU SAID YOU'LL BE ABLE TO FIND OUT THE COM-POSITION...
AND?

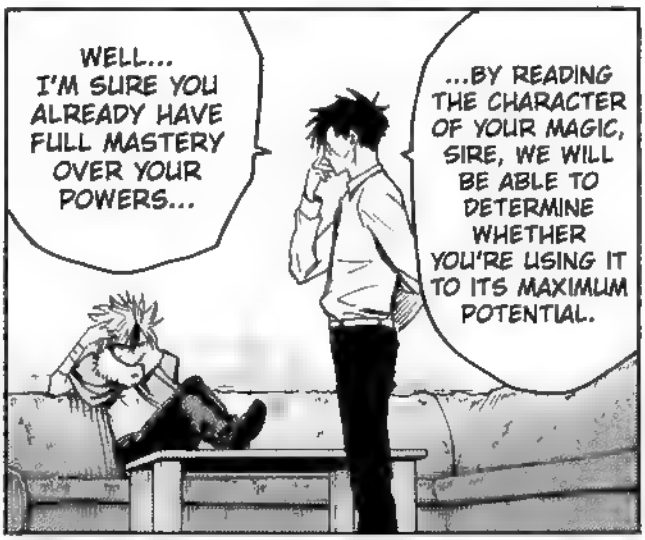
MAGIC TAKES ITS FORM AND MOVEMENT FROM THE USER'S THOUGHTS.
RIGHT ...
THE CHAR-ACTER OF MAGIC?
WELL, SIRE ...
THE "CHARACTER" OF THAT PERSON'S MAGIC WOULD BECOME APPARENT, SO TO SPEAK...

I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT YOU DID WAS SO COMPLEX, LEADER.
IT IS!
SHOW SOME RESPECT!!
WOW.
...AND BY OBSERVING THE PATTERNS OF HOW IT FLOWS — THAT IS, BY SEEING ITS CHARACTER — I DISCERN THE TARGET'S THOUGHT PROCESS!
SO I CAN SENSE HOW THE MAGIC MOVES...
I SEE...
AND WHAT IF THERE IS MORE THAN ONE MIND BEHIND THOSE THOUGHTS?
HMM... I'VE NEVER READ ANYONE WITH A SPLIT PERSONALITY, SO I CAN'T SAY FOR CERTAIN, BUT...
HRRM...
GO AHEAD AND SPEC-ULATE.
IT'S LIKELY ...
...THAT THEY WILL BE IN CONFLICT SOMEHOW...
A CLASH BETWEEN MINDS...
IF ONE WANTS TO GO RIGHT AND THE OTHER WANTS TO GO LEFT, THE MAGIC WON'T KNOW HOW TO FLOW...


...IN OTHER WORDS ...

...THERE IS ANYTHING RUNNING LESS THAN SMOOTHLY ...
BUT JUST IN CASE ...

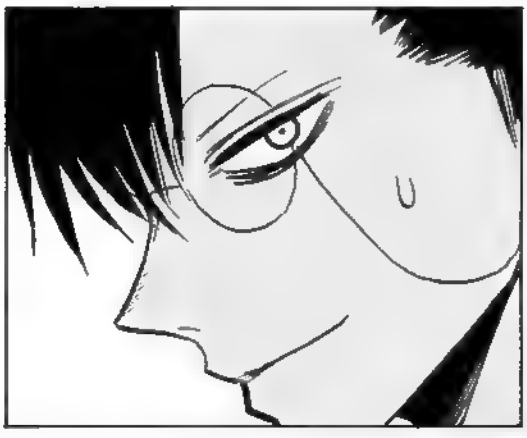
.....
...IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO ADDRESS THAT.


WELL... I'M SURE YOU ALREADY HAVE FULL MASTERY OVER YOUR POWERS...
...BY READING THE CHARACTER OF YOUR MAGIC, SIRE, WE WILL BE ABLE TO DETERMINE WHETHER YOU'RE USING IT TO ITS MAXIMUM POTENTIAL.

IT WON'T TAKE ANY OF YOUR TIME.
HOW DOES THIS WORK?
CHAKI (SNIKT)

WHAT DO YOU THINK, SIRE...?
HMMM ...

ALL I NEED...
...IS A FEW STRANDS OF YOUR HAIR.
NO NEED FOR THOSE.
BUCHI (PLUCK) ブチ ブチ BUCHI
PARARA (DRIFT) ﾗﾗ...
THANK YOU, SIRE.
I WILL INFORM YOU THE MOMENT WE HAVE THE RESULTS.
BRAZ ...



♠ To Be Continued ♠

YEAH, THIS IS PRETTY GOOD STEW.

BLOOD LAD

SCREEN: DEMONTV
...between Akim and the Blacklisted.
We have passed the two week mark until the final battle...
.....HEY, BEROS ...
Yesterday... in the wake of the riots in Demon World West, there was a new...
As the day that will the decide the fate of the Demon World draws nearer...
...the tension can be felt in every territory.
...WHAT'S UP, BOSS?
CHAPTER 65 ♠
THE ENCHANTED BASS, DEAD RESORT
...AND RETHINK OUR OBJECTIVE ...?
SHOULDN'T WE STOP...
BETWEEN THE TWO OF US, WE'VE ALREADY EXHAUSTED ALL THE SHOPS THAT MIGHT HAVE A BASS.

THAT WAS MY BEST SCORE!!
I MESSED UP BECAUSE YOU TALKED TO ME! AND I WAS ON A ROLL!
.....
AW, DAMMIT!
BUUU (BZZZT)
GAME OVER
SCORE 02675

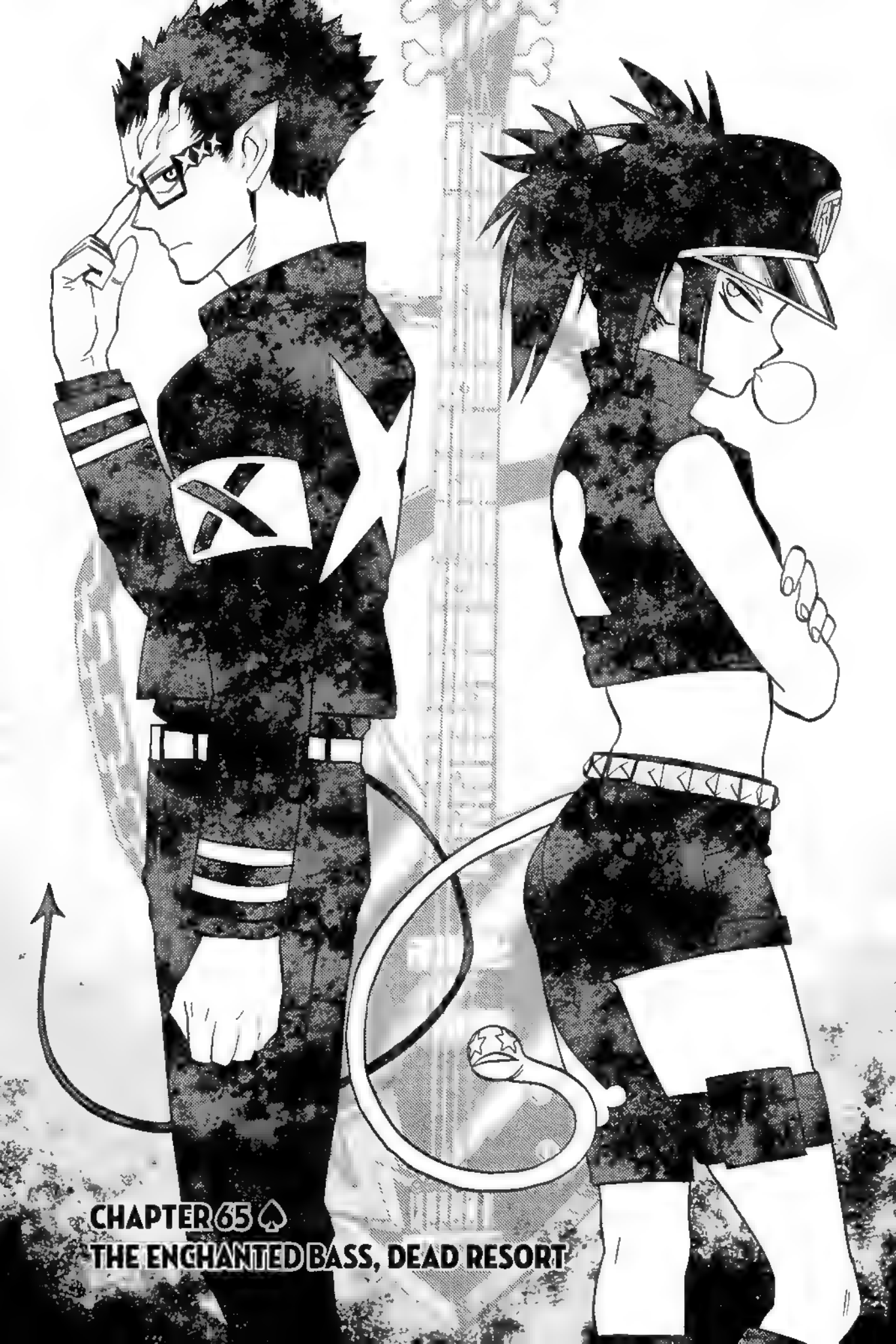
AM NOT WASTING TIME.
JUST LIKE LOOKING FOR A BASS GUITAR THAT PROBABLY DOESN'T EXIST... YOU'RE A GENIUS AT WASTING TIME.
YOU LIKE THOSE GAMES THAT JUST KEEP GOING ON INDEFINITELY, DON'T YOU?

OVER TAGGING ALONG ON THIS WILD GOOSE CHASE.
I HAPPEN TO BE NECK DEEP IN REGRET RIGHT NOW THOUGH.

I DO WHATEVER I THINK OF DOING, WHEN I THINK OF IT.
SPENDING TIME REGRETTING WHAT YOU DIDN'T DO IS THE REAL WASTE OF TIME, IF YOU ASK ME.

YEAH. I KNOW.
YOU JUST UP AND...
I NEVER SAID YOU HAD TO COME ALONG!
'SCUZE ME!?

...WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO TWO WEEKS FROM NOW?
BUT IF WE DON'T FIND IT...
I CAN'T GET OUT OF IT NOW.
TO BE HONEST, I WANT US TO FIND THAT BASS...
YOU DON'T WANT TO BE WITH-OUT ANY OPTIONS, DO YOU?
.....
DINER
...I'LL SPEND SOME MORE TIME THINKING ...
IF THIS NEXT LEAD DOESN'T PAN OUT...
...ALL RIGHT.
THEN IT'S DECIDED ...
LET'S GO.
..... GOOD.
BUT THIS ONE LOOKS PRETTY PROMIS-ING.



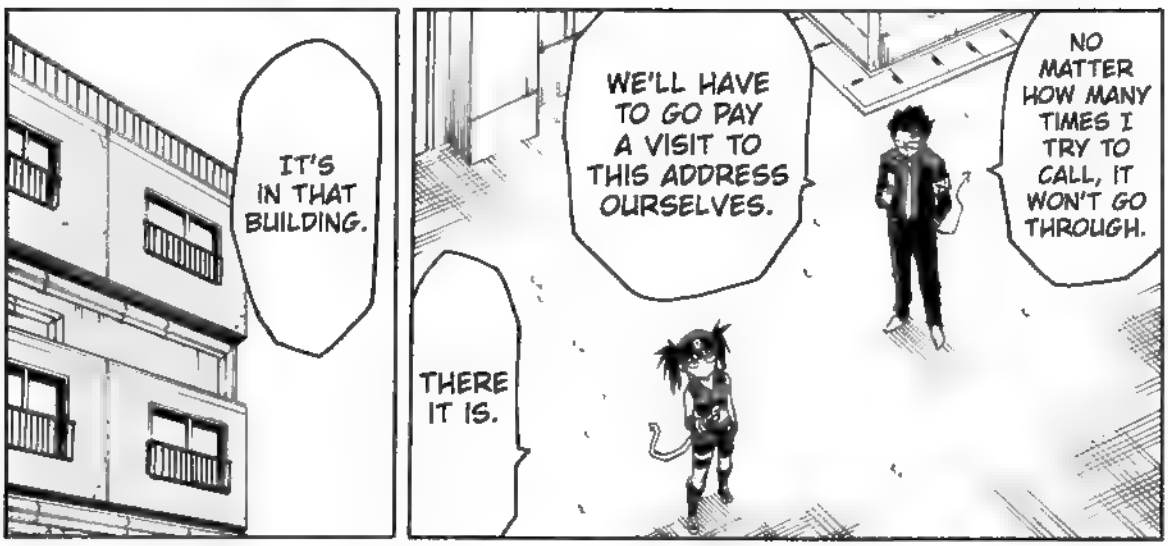
CHAPTER 65 ♠
THE ENCHANTED BASS, DEAD RESORT

SHOULD BE SOME-WHERE AROUND HERE...
HEY! YOU SURE YOUR INTEL'S LEGIT!?

WHAT!? 'COURSE IT'S LEGIT!
YOU SEE A BASS LIKE THAT... YOU DON'T FORGET IT ANYTIME SOON.

...I GUESS IT WAS ABOUT SIX MONTHS AGO...
WUH!?
WHERE!? WHEN!? WHAT WERE YOU DOIN' WHEN YOU SAW IT!? SPEAK UP, FATTY!!
HEY, THAT'S MEAN! SETTLE DOWN, WILL YA!?
THE GUY CAME TO MY SHOP AND SAID...
GO HOME. AND COME BACK NEVER, ASSHOLE. HA-HA-HA!
I TOOK ONE LOOK AT IT AND TOLD HIM...
WANNA BUY THIS BASS...?
THEN HE LEFT THIS, AND HE SAID...
SAID WHAT!?
JUST HOW BAD DO YOU SUCK AT APPRAISING AXES!? I HOPE THIS GARBAGE HEAP GOES OUTTA BUSINESS!!
HEY, HOLD UP! WAIT... WAIT!!
YOU THINK THIS IS FUNNY, PORK BUTT!?

...The party you are trying to reach is not available ...
⇒BIP⇐
IT'S NO GOOD ...
"TOO BAD... IF YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND, HERE'S HOW TO FIND ME."


IT'S IN THAT BUILDING.
WE'LL HAVE TO GO PAY A VISIT TO THIS ADDRESS OURSELVES.
NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES I TRY TO CALL, IT WON'T GO THROUGH.
THERE IT IS.

GACHA (KACHAK)
OH.
YO, JERKFACE! OPEN UP! POLICE!!
DON
DON
DON (BAM)
WHY ARE YOU ALWAYS SO EAGER TO START A FIGHT...?
HEY, BEROS ...
⇒BEEEEP⇐
⇒BEEEEP⇐

I DON'T GIVE A RAT'S ASS ABOUT THE LAW RIGHT NOW... WAIT...
HUH?
HEY! THAT'S UNLAWFUL ENTRY!
GACHA (KACHAK)
OH, HEY, IT'S OPEN.
GII (CREAK)
BAAAAN (DADUUUUM)
DIE
WHA ...!?

HE'S STILL WARM!
!
BOSS... THIS FISH IS STILL FLOPPING!
HE WON'T BE IF YOU DON'T STOP PULLING ON HIM!!
IDIOT! DON'T PULL HIM!!
BIN (TIGHTEN)
GYUUU (TUG)
DUMBASS! YOU GOT SO MUCH TO LIVE FOR!!
PACHI
NGH...
HE SAYS, HANGING IN A NOOSE.
DYING...!? WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I'M NOT TRYING TO DIE...
NO DYING!!
THEN WHAT THE HELL WERE YOU TRYIN' TO DO!?
WE'RE YOUR SAVIORS, THAT'S WHO!! AND YOU'RE GONNA HAVE A CHANGE OF HEART!!
WHA...? WHO'RE YOU GUYS?
HUH!?

OH, SO YOU'RE POLICE OFFICERS ...
SORRY, IT'S A LITTLE CRAMPED IN HERE...
DIE
I HAVE GILLS, Y'KNOW, SO I CAN BREATHE THROUGH HERE...
YES...
YOU WERE REALLY JUST SLEEPING LIKE THAT...?
NO, THAT'S ALL RIGHT. WE SHOULD APOLOGIZE FOR BARGING IN.
SO I THOUGHT, MAYBE I CAN SLEEP UPRIGHT INSTEAD OF LYING DOWN, AND IT JUST FELT RIGHT...
ゴチャ
GOCHA (MESSY)
SEE... I DON'T HAVE A LOT OF SPACE...
I'M SORRY ...
THAT DOESN'T EXPLAIN WHY YOU'D HANG YOURSELF TO GO TO SLEEP.

RIGHT, TOM...THE REASON WE CAME IS...
...BECAUSE WE HEARD THAT YOU MIGHT BE IN POSSESSION OF THIS.
I SUPPOSE HOW YOU SLEEP IS YOUR OWN BUSINESS ...
WELL ...
OH. I'M TOM JOKE.
BUT ACTUALLY, THE REASON WE'RE HERE... MISTER...
A BASS GUITAR THAT PLAYS NOTES AT A FREQUENCY THAT CAN BREAK DOWN MAGIC.
THE ENCHANTED BASS— DEAD RESORT.
THAT'S ...
WOW...
I THOUGHT I WAS THE ONLY ONE IN THE DEMON WORLD WHO KNEW ABOUT THAT BASS...
GOKU (GULP)
ゴク...

OOOOO (GLOOM)
WELL, DEAD RESORT ...
...WAS IN MY POSSES-SION.
Tika-tika-tika-tika-tik...
Tika-tika-tika-tika-tik...
HEY, HONEY?

NONE OTHER THAN...
...DEATH METAL.
OH. HUH.
MUSIC HAS LOTS OF GENRES...
...BUT DO YOU KNOW WHICH ONE HAS THE SOUND THAT WAS BORN IN THE DEMON WORLD?
WHAT IS IT, SLASH, BABE?
BUT I CAN'T KEEP FROM SAYING IT... WHENEVER I'M LISTENING TO DEATH METAL.
OH? THAT MANY?
THAT'S ONLY, LIKE, THE 5,000TH TIME YOU'VE TOLD ME THAT.
I JUST GOTTA EXPAND MY COLLECTION OF DEMON WORLD SOUND, Y'KNOW, HONEY...
THE DEMON WORLD'S GOT A GOOD SOUND...

Y... YEAH...THE TERRITORY BOSS, A GUY CALLED SLASH...

WHAT!?
SOME-BODY NABBED DEAD RESORT!?

I WAS JUST LEAVING A SHOP THAT REFUSED TO BUY IT OFF ME, AND I HAPPENED TO RUN INTO HIM...
IT WAS THE ONE THING I HAD THAT WAS WORTH ANY MONEY.

IF IT WASN'T FOR HIM... I COULD'VE SOLD THAT BASS SOME-WHERE, AND I'D BE ABLE TO PAY MY PHONE BILL AND GET SOMETHING TO EAT!
DAMMIT!!
DAN (BAM)

HEY, MAN...
GOT SOMETHIN' FANCY THERE, YEAAAAAHH?

HE DOESN'T HAVE A USUAL SPOT. HE'S ALWAYS JUST DRIFTING AROUND SOMEWHERE. THAT'S HOW HE IS...I ONLY RAN INTO HIM BY CHANCE MYSELF.
.....NO IDEA.
WHERE IS THIS SLASH?
..... SO...
BUTSU (MUTTER)
BUTSU
SO I HAVE NO CLUE WHERE HE MIGHT BE NOW.
...UH... WHAT'S HE DOING?
NYUUURGH!
.....
FOCUSING HIS ANGER.
BASTAAARD...
FOCUS-ING?

?
.....
?
TCH.
SO, DUH, THE CAPTAIN'S GETTING GOOD AND ANGRY FOR YA.
YOU SAID YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE SLASH IS.
DIE
HOW COME?
PUSU
PUSU (SIZZLE)
.....
OH... YEAH.
BUT I LEFT...
WHA ...?
TOM, RIGHT?
SO WERE YOU IN A BAND?
SLASH IS A METAL-HEAD...
...AND HE DOESN'T ALLOW ANY OTHER KIND OF BANDS.
BUT WE'RE NOT ALLOWED TO PLAY IT IN THIS TERRITORY.
I LIKE GARAGE ROCK... LIKE FROM THE '60s...

UH-HUH...
IN THE END... THE BAND SPLIT UP, AND EVERYONE ELSE JUST JOINED METAL BANDS TO PLAY STUFF THE BOSS LIKES...
...THAT MY BASS PLAYING IS PRETTY TAME FOR METAL...
NEVER MIND THE FACT...
SO YOU JUST GAVE UP...
GYU (CLENCH)
A LONE BASSIST CAN'T DO ANYTHING...!
WHAT ELSE COULD I DO ...!?
THERE'S JUST DO OR DON'T.
THERE'S NO CAN OR CAN'T.

THERE IT IS. FINALLY.

.....

I HAD A HARD TIME GETTING IN THE MOOD...
YEAH ...
THAT LOOKED LIKE A TOUGH ONE.
GUN
GUN (GROW)

GEROOOO. (BARRRF)
ゴロォォォ
BLAAARGH!!

EVEN THOUGH IT'S AN ABUSE OF MY SPECIAL DISPENSATION...
GUN
GUN

I HAD TO TAKE OUT ALL MY PENT-UP FRUSTRATION ON THIS...
IT WAS HALF VENTING.

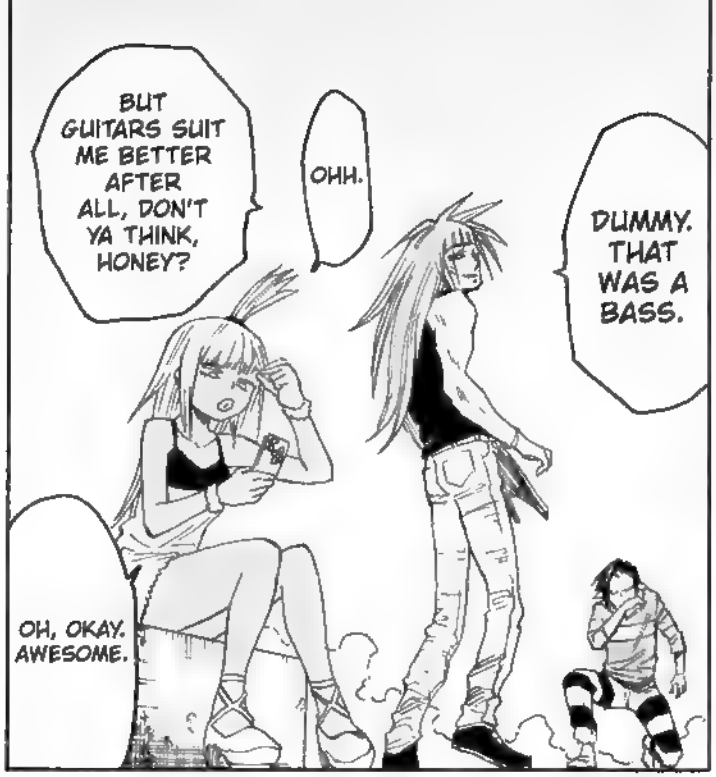
YAHHH!!
DO
DO
DO (RUMBLE)
RIGHT NOW, I DON'T GIVE A RAT'S ASS ABOUT THE LAW.
LET'S GO, ANGRY.
I OUGHTA TELL YOU...
OH...

BASA (FLAP)
WE'RE ABOUT TO GO AND GET YOUR BASS...
...BUT WE'RE KEEPIN' IT FOR OUR-SELVES.

...BUT, Y'KNOW ...
...IF YOU DO FEEL LIKE DOIN' SOME-THING...

I'LL TAKE GOOD CARE OF IT.
LOOKS LIKE YOU DON'T WANNA PLAY IT ANY MORE ANYWAY.

GUH!
BO (WHAM)
MAN... WHY CAN'T YA JUST HAND IT OVER LIKE I SAID?
UUH ...
YOUR GUITAR GETS A NEW HOME IN MY COLLECTION, Y'KNOW.
NO GREATER JOY IN THE WORLD.
COME AND GET IT BACK ...
... WHEN-EVER ...


BUT GUITARS SUIT ME BETTER AFTER ALL, DON'T YA THINK, HONEY?
OHH.
DUMMY. THAT WAS A BASS.
OH, OKAY. AWESOME.

AW, C'MON, SLASH, SERI-OUSLY?
YOU JUST GOT A DIFFERENT GUITAR THE OTHER DAY.
YOU'RE, LIKE, BORED WITH IT ALREADY?

I HEARD THAT, PUNK... WELL?
YOU SAYIN' I CAN'T PLAY? HUH?

YOU CAN'T EVEN PLAY 'EM PROPERLY ...
PEH...

'SCUSE ME?

BA (RUSH)
GIVE IT BACK !!

GIMME BACK MY GUITAR ...

(WHAM)
HEY, IF YOU WANT IT BACK THAT BAD...
...YOU CAN HAVE IT.
YAHHH!!
オオオ
(WHOOSH)

FLYYING...
クル クル
KURU KURU
KURU (SPIN)
クル クル
KURU KURU
THERE HE IS, BEROS!!
THAT'S HIM!!
バ
BA (RELEASE)
ッ
ドロ...ッ!
DO (WHUD)

ガガガガガガガ
GAGAGAGAGAGAGA
(CRAAAAASH)

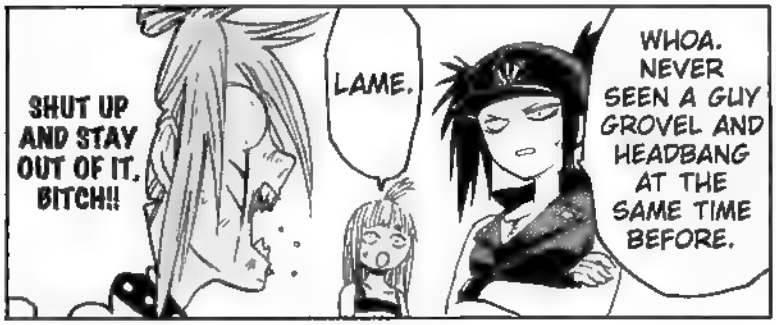
PORO
(DROP)

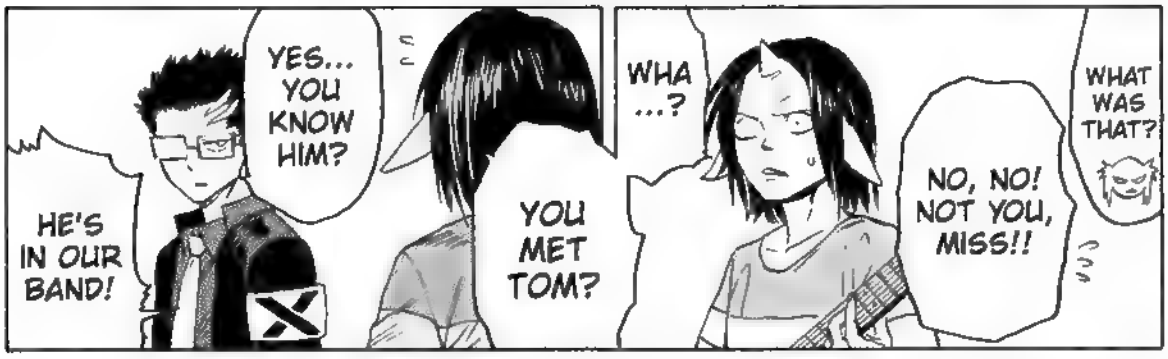
SHUUUU
(HSSSS)
シュウウウ

DID I OVERDO IT...?
OOPS ...

I'M SORRY! I'M SO SORRY!
BUN
BUN (WHIP)
OH, NO...WE JUST...
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU WOULD SAVE ME...

THANK YOU!
THANK YOU...!


SHUT UP AND STAY OUT OF IT, BITCH!!
LAME.
WHOA. NEVER SEEN A GUY GROVEL AND HEADBANG AT THE SAME TIME BEFORE.


HE'S IN OUR BAND!
YES... YOU KNOW HIM?
YOU MET TOM?
WHA ...?
NO, NO! NOT YOU, MISS!!
WHAT WAS THAT?

BABAAAN (TA-DAAA)

OR... TECHNI-CALLY, HE WAS IN OUR BAND...
..... I SEE.

WELL, BOSS... THE MOMENT'S FINALLY HERE.
UH-HUH... QUIT CALLIN' ME "MISS."
THIS IS THE BASS I TOOK, MISS...
HE HE...
HERE...
LAAAME.
THAT'S... TOM'S BASS...!
RIGHT.
THAT'S RIGHT.
UH-HUH. AND DON'T MAKE ANY MORE TROUBLE.
LAAAME.
HEKO
HEKO (BOW)
ALL RIGHT, I'LL BE LEAVING NOW.
YOU REALLY CAME ALL THE WAY OUT HERE TO GET IT...!?
GACHA (SNAP)
WHA...? BUT...
THAT BASS ... IT'S...
THIS IS THE BASS WE'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR.

ベベベーン
BEBEEEEN
(WOMP-WOMP)

.....
.....HM.

...
...MAYBE?
ペラ
PERA
(FLIP)
...WELL... IT DOES LOOK LIKE IT...

.....
ベぇーーん
BEEEN
.....

YOU KNOW WHAT IT'S ABOUT...?
SO IT'S A FIGHTING STORY, BASICALLY ...
HE REALLY LOVES THAT COMIC...
SO...
TOM KIND OF...MADE THAT HIMSELF...
...ALL WITH THE POWER OF THEIR MUSIC.
THEY BEAT THE BAD GUYS AND SAVE PEOPLE...
THESE PEOPLE WITH SUPER-POWERS GET TOGETHER AND FORM A BAND.
...HE WANTED TO BE LIKE THAT...
TOM SAID ...
YEAH. I READ IT.
IT WAS THE RADDEST THING EVER.
...HE HOPED WE COULD TAKE DOWN SLASH...
WE COULDN'T WIN ON STRENGTH ALONE... BUT...WITH THE POWER OF OUR MUSIC...

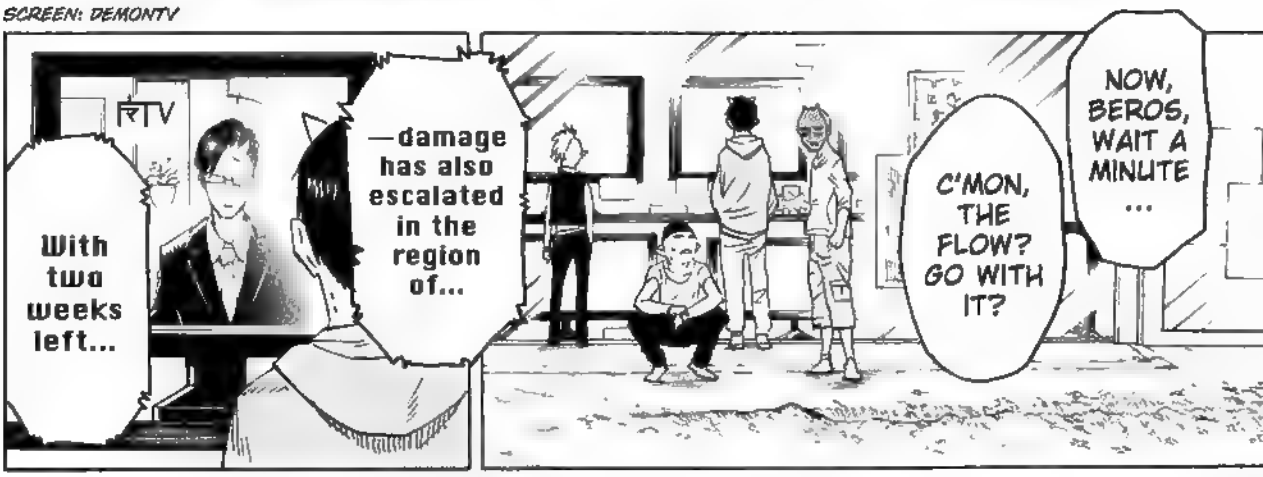
...BUT IN THE END...
...WE STILL LOST...
DIE
.....
THE REAL DEAD RESORT DOESN'T EXIST.
SO THAT'S THE END OF OUR QUEST...
BUT THIS IS HOW IT IS.
..... SORRY ...
ギュッ…
GYU (CLENCH)
..... YOU'RE RIGHT ...

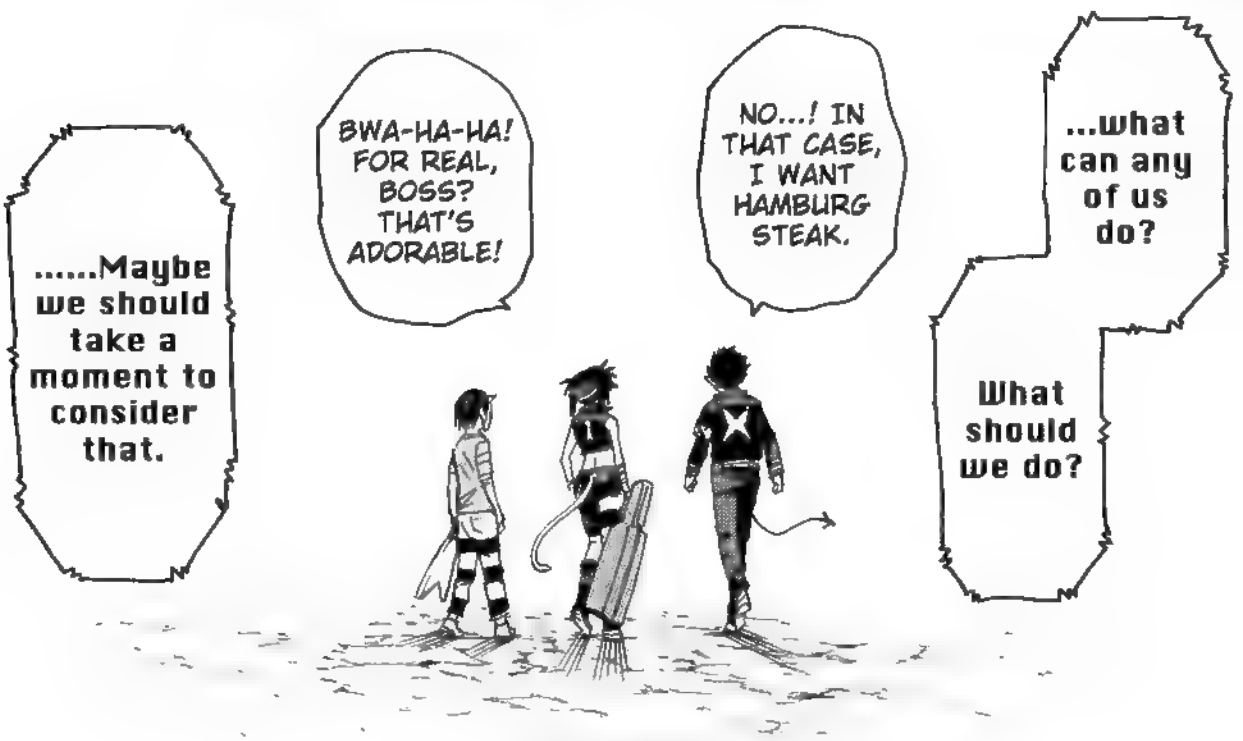
I PROMISED.
I'LL TAKE MY BAND ALL THE WAY TO THE TOP WITH THIS BASS...
DON'T TALK SO MUCH ABOUT YOUR SIDE GIG IN FRONT OF YOUR BOSS ...
THE TOP ...?
AGAIN WITH THIS ...
WELL ...
...I'LL TAKE CARE OF THIS.

SFX: BEN (STRUM) BEBEN BEN

HUH ...!?
YUP. YOU TOO.
TAKE US WHER-EVER'S GOOD AROUND HERE.
YEAH, SO WE SHOULD DO IT OVER SOME GRUB.
...WE NEED TO HAVE A STRATEGIC DISCUSSION ABOUT WHERE TO GO FROM HERE!
DON'T BE SILLY ...
WELL... WHY DON'T WE SIT DOWN AND HAVE SOME GRUB?

SCREEN: DEMONTV

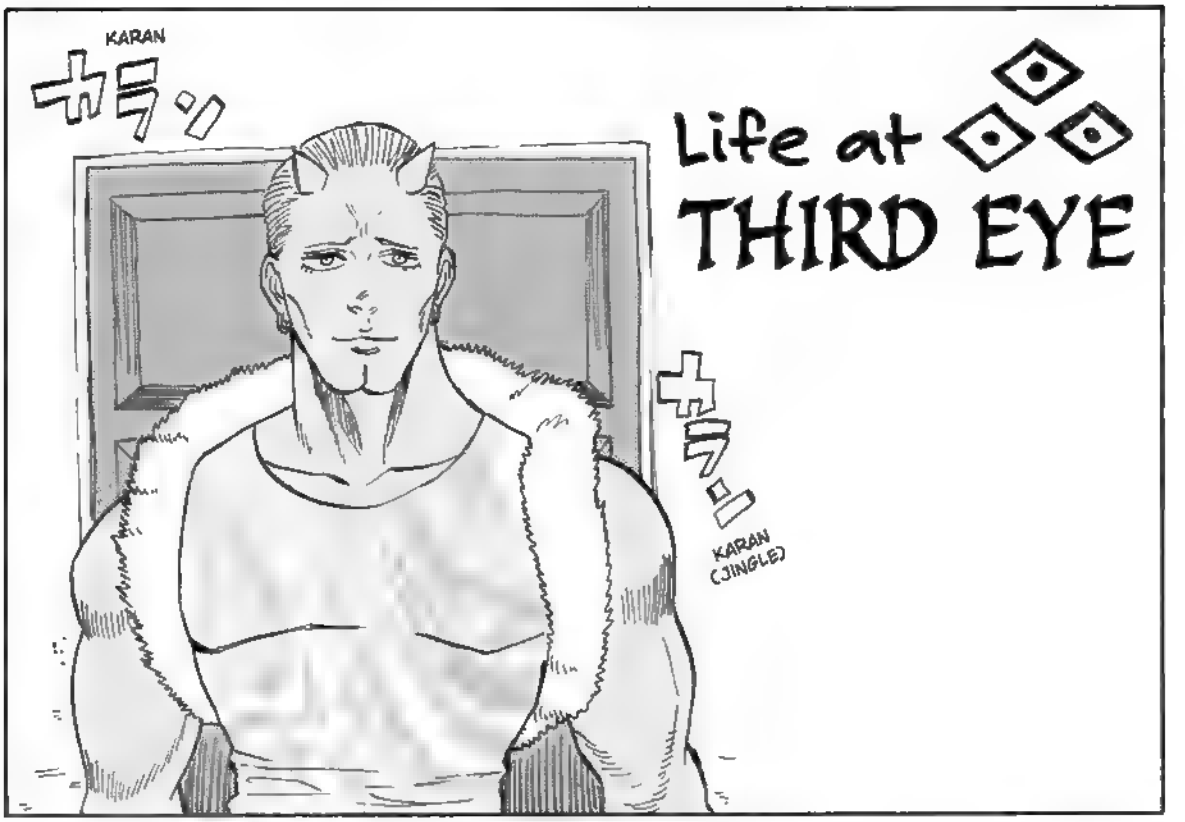



.....Maybe we should take a moment to consider that.
BWA-HA-HA! FOR REAL, BOSS? THAT'S ADORABLE!
NO...! IN THAT CASE, I WANT HAMBURG STEAK.
...what can any of us do?
What should we do?

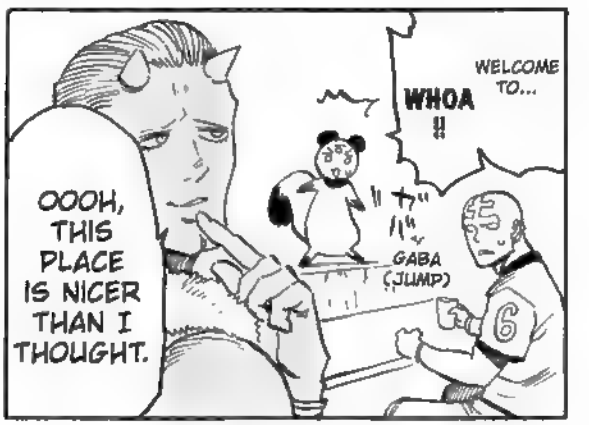
♠ To Be Continued ♠

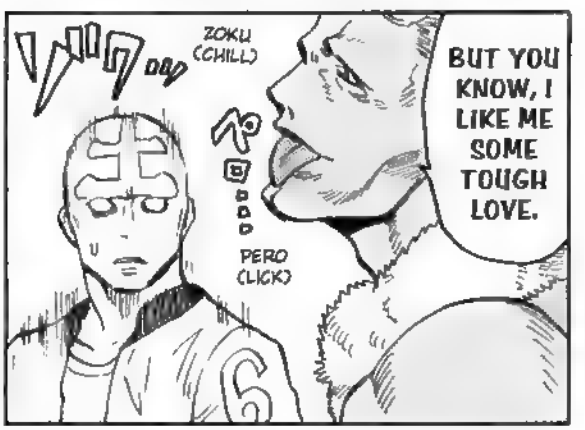
To Be Continued

BLOOD LAD

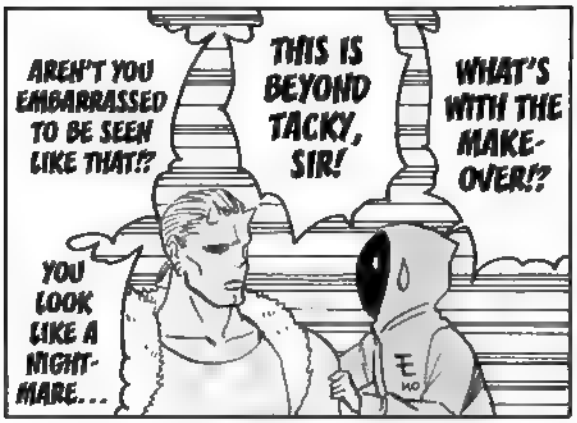


AN OGRE ARRIVES

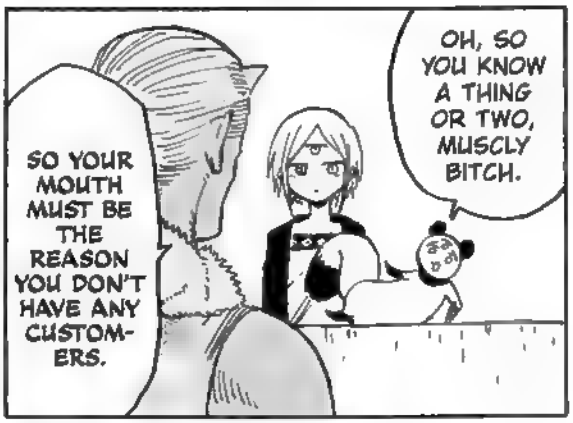


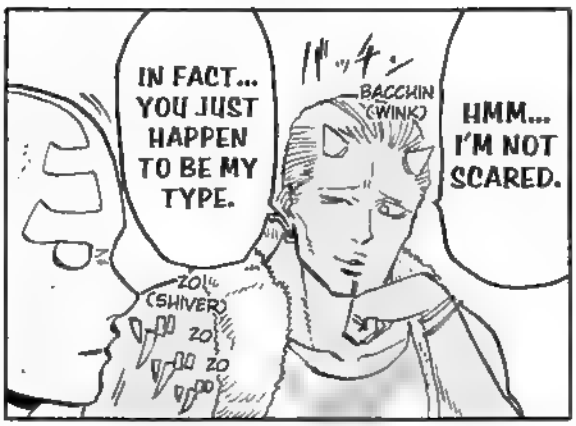


THE OGRE ATTACKS (PHYSICAL)

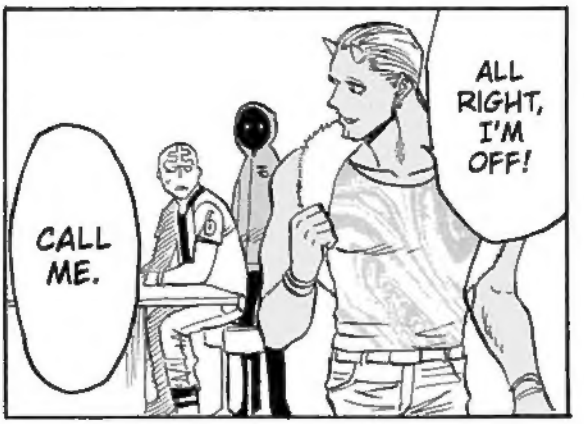


THE OGRE LIKES IT

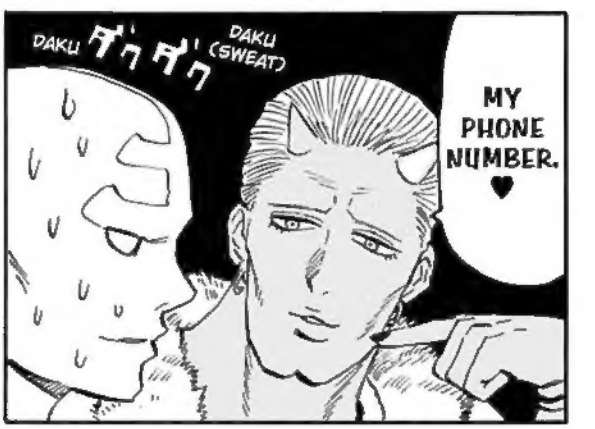




EVERYONE IS AN OGRE



THE OGRE ATTACKS (MENTAL)



END

BLOOD LAD 13

These images appeared under the jacket of the original edition of *Blood Lad*!

REMEMBER WHAT I SAID BACK AROUND, LIKE, VOLUME 2...?
ACTUALLY... I'M REGRETTING IT NOW...
OH, HEY... YOU'RE BACK AGAIN...
WE'VE BEEN SEEIN' EACH OTHER LIKE THIS FOR THIRTEEN VOLUMES NOW.

RIGHT... BACK THEN, I WENT AND SAID SOMETHING LIKE, "IT'S GONNA BE ME ALL THE TIME IN THIS SPACE." SORRY...
...BUT I JUST CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE. I HOPE YOU UNDER-STAND...
NEXT TIME, THE ONE GREETING YOU HERE WON'T BE ME...
SO TELL 'EM HI FOR ME. SEE YA 'ROUND.....

BLOOD LAD 13

YUUKI KODAMA

Translation: Melissa Tanaka

Lettering: Alexis Eckerman

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

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Yen Press
Hachette Book Group
1290 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10104

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First Yen Press ebook Edition: February 2016

ebook ISBN: 978-0-316-26913-1

App ISBN: 978-0-316-26914-8